



# MOVE TO GET RID OF EYESORE

Report by Richard Guttridge

**DUDLEY'S** regeneration boss has said he is hopeful an eyesore office block overlooking the town centre will be bulldozed 'as soon as possible'.

Cavendish House has stood empty for years and an ambitious plan is in the pipeline to knock it down and replace it with homes and shops.

But more than a year after the plans were revealed it appears the demolition of Cavendish House could be a way off, with funding still needing to be secured.

Twenty-five firefighters tackled a blaze at the empty building on Trindle Road in Dudley town centre on Saturday night.

A West Midlands Fire Service spokesman said that crews from Dudley, Tipton, Brierley

Hill and Bilston were mobilised to the incident in 39 seconds and quickly got the blaze under control.

A West Midlands Police spokesman said officers were at the scene to assist with traffic and there was no evidence to suggest it was an arson attack.

Councillor Khurshid Ahmed, cabinet member for regeneration and economic development at Dudley Council, said a meeting was planned with the owners of the multi-storey building, which overlooks Duncan Edwards Way heading into Dudley, with a view to moving the plans forward to re-plant the prominent site.

Various schemes involving Cavendish House have been put forward over the years without coming to fruition and there has long been frustration about the eyesore building remaining disused.

## Homes

When the building is finally knocked down it is hoped the area will be redeveloped creating homes, restaurants and shops, under plans put forward by property developer Avenbury Dudley.

The company bought the site for £800,000 at a property auction in London in 2015.

Councillor Ahmed said he was desperate to get this scheme moving.

He said: "We are supporting and helping them to make an application to the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership to get funding for the demolition of the building. We are actively supporting them to try and get the plans through."

"It's the gateway to Dudley and has been sitting there idle for far too long. We want to see it redeveloped as soon as possible."

"We need a lot more homes."

## PARK'S FASCINATING PAST REVEALED IN NEW BOOK



Written by historians Stephen Howard, left, and Roy Peacock, from Stourbridge, *Beauty For Everyone: The Story Of Mary Stevens Park* is now on sale

A BOOK exploring the history of Mary Stevens Park has gone on sale.

*Beauty For Everyone: The Story Of Mary Stevens Park* has been written by the park's history group with local historians Roy Peacock and Stephen Howard.

The book reveals the park's historic links to the glass industry and also explores how the well-known Stourbridge beauty spot has played an important part in life of the town and its people for several centuries.

The park's history group sourced photographs, testimonials, memories and helped

with research to reveal the fascinating park heritage.

Mr Peacock, aged 82, of Whitehall Road, Stourbridge, said: "We were trying to look at the history of the building and the people that lived in the park under its previous names.

And it turns out the families were very important. For example, parts of the Crystal Palace, in Hyde Park, were built by a family who lived in Studley Court, as it was known then.

"If we go back into the 19th century, the chap who built the first railway to come to Stourbridge, a man called Rufford, lived

there. It was a military hospital in the First World War too.

"Interestingly, the gates of the park were designed by the same firm that designed the gates for Buckingham Palace, and of course, you can see the resemblance!"

"The book is full of these important stories revealing how significant the park was not just for local people but on a national level too."

The book is available from the Mary Stevens Coffee Lounge in the park and Oldswinford Coffee Lounge No92. It costs £7.99.

## STABBINGS

### Murder accused is back in court

A PROVISIONAL trial date has been set for a man accused of murdering a mother and her son at their Stourbridge home.

Aaron Barley is charged with the murder of Tracey Wilkinson, 50, and 13-year-old Pierce Wilkinson and is to face trial on October 3, although the 23-year-old has not yet entered a plea. Mother and son were killed at their home in Greyhound Lane, Norton, Barley, who was remanded in custody at Birmingham Crown Court on Monday, is also charged with the attempted murder of father Peter Wilkinson.

● Daughter's sad return – Page 3

## HIPPODROME

### Campaigners need £4,500 for solicitor

CAMPAIGNERS striving to restore Dudley Hippodrome have hit an obstacle as they need to raise £4,500 for a solicitor.

Until the money has been found, they will be unable to submit legal plans to the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership and start work on refurbishing the iconic building, which they saved from demolition.

The delay was revealed to the public during a meeting of The Black Country Hippodrome Ltd on Sunday.

## FOOTBALL

### Hospice wins at big charity match

THOUSANDS turned out for a charity football match that raised more than £20,000 for Mary Stevens Hospice.

A team of ex-West Bromwich Albion pros, led by former captain Darren 'Big Dave' Moore, beat a Stourbridge Legends XI at the War Memorial Athletic Ground, Amblecote, on Sunday.

A mascot race, won by Baggie Bird, preceded the game. Dudley Mayor Mohammed Hanif lent his support to the event, co-founded by Matt Webb, in memory of his late mother Jane. Matt said: "I can't tell everyone how grateful I am."

● See pictures – Page 39

## INSIDE

### GRAND DAY OUT WITH DOREEN



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EDITORIAL:  
Tel: 01384 353201/01384 353205  
E-mail: dudley.chrons@expressandstar.co.uk

SPORTS:  
Tel: 01902 319453  
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# Nothing suspicious about fatal fire



A police officer at the scene of the fire

A FATAL house fire in Cradley Heath is not being treated as suspicious, police have confirmed.

A woman in her 50s – named locally only as Joanne – was found dead at the flat in New Pool Road on March 29.

Emergency services attended the scene just after 9.30am but nothing could be done to save the woman, who lived alone at the flat.

ON Monday a West Midlands Police spokesman said the fire is being treated as 'non-suspicious'.

The victim is believed to have

been discovered by a relative who then called emergency services to the scene.

A burned-out mattress was on the front lawn of the property as fire investigators combed the flat.

A cat was found hiding in the kitchen and is now in the care of the RSPCA.

Neighbours spoke of their shock at what had happened and described Joanne as being quiet but well-liked in the area.

Sheila Smith, aged 74, who has lived in the flat above her for around

five years, said: "I was about to go out to the doctor's when her brother knocked the door and said she that was dead."

"It's such a shame, I knew her and she used to walk my dog for me."

"I only saw her on Saturday in town. She was nice."

Neighbour Edna Slater, 74, broke down in tears as she laid flowers on the lawn in front of the property yesterday.

She said: "She was a lovely. She was very quiet and never bothered anybody. She loved cats."

# Hate campaign 'classic case of domestic abuse'

POLICE have labelled the actions of a businessman who waged a hate campaign against his ex-partner as 'a classic case of domestic abuse'.

Robert McNaughton was jailed for five years for waging the campaign – which culminated in a petrol bomb being thrown at her car.

He had denied being behind fake Facebook accounts, which were set up to troll hairdresser Sharon McCann during a six-month harassment campaign.

However, police charged 51-year-old McNaughton, of Tenter Drive, Halesowen, with conspiracy to commit arson and harassment and he was found guilty after a trial at Wolverhampton Crown Court. On Friday he was jailed for five years.

Sergeant Chris Jones said: "McNaughton was a successful local businessman who could not handle being rejected and became hell bent on destroying his ex-partners life."

"She was in total fear and we knew that we needed to stop the person responsible."

## Control

"This was a classic case of domestic abuse, he wanted to control his ex and used fear to do that."

"Domestic abuse comes in many forms and if you are suffering physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse, or are being threatened or intimidated in your home by a current or previous partner or adult family member, you are a victim of domestic abuse."

"You may be feeling frightened, isolated, ashamed and confused. Remember you are not to blame for what is happening. You are not alone, and above all you do not have to suffer in silence. Help is available."

"We are pleased that the jury saw through his lies and that he has now been sent to jail. We hope that this offers some comfort to the victim and we commend her bravery for coming



Robert McNaughton – jailed for five years

forward in what has been a long and successful investigation."

The court heard that McNaughton's ex-partner had rejected his attempts at a reconciliation but he was unable to accept this and launched a systematic hate campaign.

Not long after they parted McNaughton had been jailed for six months for contempt of court for ignoring an order to move a huge pile of rubbish at the RDF site at Moor Street, Brierley Hill, which he was responsible for as a company boss.

During December 2014 and Febru-

ary 2015 he bombarded Miss McCann with abusive Facebook messages, threatening to release intimate images. The court heard that it had driven her to consider suicide.

## Attacks

But he was not content with simply terrorising her via social media. He hired two men, Matthew Barker and Joden Smith, to carry out attacks on her home in Hopwood Close, Halesowen, culminating in February 2015 when her car was set on fire.



Sharon McCann – has moved abroad

Prior to the start of McNaughton's trial, Matthew Barker, aged 42 from Leicester, pleaded guilty to a charge of conspiracy to commit criminal damage, while 20-year-old Joden Smith, also from Leicester, admitted the conspiracy to commit criminal damage and arson, recklessly endangering life.

Barker was jailed for 43 months and Smith was sent to a young offenders' institute for four years.

The court heard that Miss McCann has since sold her Halesowen home and moved abroad.

# Shoplifter who defied ban gets 18 months jail

A PROLIFIC thief, who defied a court ban to go on a shoplifting spree in Dudley town centre, has been locked up for 18 months.

Gavin Garratt struck nine times in two months at Dudley stores from which he had been outlawed, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard. The 29-year-old took food, cosmetics and even pens to fund his drug habit with the largest single haul being valued at £173, explained Mrs Sati Ruck, prosecuting.

The one-man crime wave started on January 5 and continued until his arrest on March 1. It involved shops in and around Dudley High Street with most of the offences captured on CCTV.

"He is the subject of a Criminal Anti Social Behaviour Order (Crasbo) preventing him visiting these shops but keeps going into them," said the prosecutor.

Mr Glenn Cook, defending, said: "He is a drug addict who has been using Class A drugs for the past four years, during which time his offending has accelerated. This was a two-month crime spree."

Garratt from Jarvis Close, Brierley Hill, who had previous convictions for theft, pleaded guilty to nine thefts and nine breaches of the order.

He was locked up for a total of 18 months by Recorder Anthony Warner, who told him: "You have committed this type of offence many times before. Drugs cannot be regarded as an excuse for committing crime. In fact, it can be regarded as an aggravating feature."

# Appeal for action over 'boy racers'

CALLS have been made for action on 'boy racers' causing a nuisance in an area of Halesowen.

Long Lane at Shell Corner has been labelled a 'racetrack' by councillors.

Car racers are believed to be driving up and down the road at speed late at night.

Residents have flagged the issue to police and taken to Facebook to express their concern.

Councillor Hilary Bills, who represents Halesowen North ward, said: "It comes and goes in our area but over the last week or so it has started up again. About 18 months ago we had a similar problem then and the police were great in sorting it out. We hope that they will be able to do the same this time."

# Apartments plan on pub outhouse site

HOMES are set to be built next to a former pub in Cradley – on the site of a former outhouse.

An application has been lodged with Dudley Council to convert the site at the Chainmaker on Colley Lane into three apartments.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

## Council leading Big Switch move

DUDLEY Council is urging people to sign up to its latest Big Switch collective energy scheme, which is designed to save borough residents money.

The scheme promises residents market leading deals on energy prices not available elsewhere, through collective purchasing power.

In previous auctions more than 6,000 people across Dudley have registered to switch for savings.

To find out more call Dudley Council Plus on 0300 555 2345 or visit [www.dudley.gov.uk/bigswitch](http://www.dudley.gov.uk/bigswitch) website.

## Churches uniting to seek new home

TWO churches in Dudley borough have united under one banner and church bosses are now looking for a new home.

Hanbury Hill Baptist Church and Halesowen Baptist Church have decided to solidify their relationship of many years. The 139-year-old Halesowen Baptist Church sold their building almost two years ago. The decision was made for Halesowen, who were left with eight members, to join 187-year-old Hanbury Hill Baptist's worship. They are coming together under the name Hope Baptist Church.

## Society's match boosts charity

A BUILDING society from the Black Country held its inaugural charity five-a-side tournament in aid of Teenage Cancer Trust.

More than 70 players pulled on their football boots for the West Brom's Charity Cup at Goals Dudley, on Cakemore Road in Rowley Regis.

The tournament and a raffle for prizes including signed West Bromwich Albion and Aston Villa shirts raised more than £1,200 for the society's nominated charity.

## Supermarket's bags of help for local causes

COMMUNITY projects in the Black Country could receive a cash injection thanks to Tesco's Bags of Help initiative.

Tesco have teamed up with Groundwork to launch the monthly roll-out of its funding scheme, which could see grants of up to £4,000 – all raised from the 5p bag levy – being awarded to community projects in Dudley and Cradley Heath.

Ask in store for more information or visit [www.tesco.com/bagsofhelp/](http://www.tesco.com/bagsofhelp/)

## Work at bus station

TEMPORARY bus stops will be in place from Tuesday as resurfacing work is carried out at Cradley Heath bus station.

Passengers will face disruption when work gets under way at the bus station on Forge Lane. The work is expected to continue until April 22.

# Lord Cobham buys golf club near his stately home

A NEW era for one of the area's top golfing venue is swinging into action after its sale to a Midlands peer.

Hagley Golf and Country Club has been bought by Lord Cobham, the owner of nearby Hagley Hall.

The club, on the outskirts of Stourbridge, had been on sale for six months and a deal was done last week which will see Lord Cobham take the reins from the Garratt family, who have owned it since its inception in 1980.

It was put up for sale by the family following the death of the club's principal shareholder Michael Garratt last year.

The club was marketed for £2.25 million and managing director Peter Garratt Johnson said the club has 'got its asking price' in what was 'quite a complex deal'.

He said he believes the new ownership will mean 'business as usual' for patrons and staff.

Mr Garratt Johnson said: "This has been in process for six months. Lord Cobham is behind it and it's going to be very much business as usual – we're pretty pleased with how everything has gone. That is why the Garratt family is selling to him."

"He is going to very much keep it as it is with the same membership and business model. He spoke at the AGM and all the members were pretty pleased with what he said. He's local and very much cares for Hagley. I've run it for 17 years and I'm going to go back to Australia now."

## Doctor denying sexual assaults

A DOCTOR has denied sexually assaulting five patients while working at a surgery in Dudley during January of last year.

Dr Amirul Haque is alleged to have committed the offences at the practice between January 14 and January 22, 2016.

The 32-year-old, from Ladypool Road, Balsall Heath, Birmingham, pleaded not guilty to all five charges when he appeared at Wolverhampton Crown Court last Wednesday.

He was remanded on bail after a start date for his trial at the same court was previously set for February 8 next year.

The charges relate to five counts of sexual assault committed against separate patients.

## Curry and laughs at comedy night

THE Kum-n-avaloff monthly comedy night will take place at Stourbridge Town Hall tonight (Thursday) from 8pm. Tickets cost £8. Curry and rice will be served during the interval, included in the ticket price.

# Pressure mounts to save leisure centres

DUDLEY Council is under pressure to scrap plans to close its three leisure centres with some councillors saying they will not support the move.

The authority wants to shut leisure centres in Dudley, Stourbridge and Halesowen and replace them with two newly-built facilities in Dudley and Lye.

Almost 5,000 people are backing a petition against the proposal, which bosses say will save money.

The plan has led to concerns about a reduction in leisure facilities and people in parts of the borough facing travelling greater distances, particularly as the new centres would probably be in Dudley town centre and Lye.

Councillors are due to discuss the proposals next week in the face of a backlash from residents who want the three leisure centres to stay open.

The controlling Labour group may have to rely on some Conservative councillors to support the plan if they want to get it approved, after UKIP group leader Councillor Paul Brothwood said he would not support it. Labour does not command a majority at the council house.

### Refurbishing

Council bosses insist the plan is more cost effective than refurbishing its existing sites, Dudley Leisure Centre, Crystal Leisure Centre in Stourbridge and Halesowen Leisure Centre. They also say the new centres would offer better, modern facilities.

But it would mean one of the borough's towns being left without a leisure centre.

Councillor Brothwood said: "This is a red line for us. We must have at least three leisure centres given the size of our population."

"We have seen the shocking statistics in how many unhealthy people we have in the borough and people need to have access to leisure centres. We are all for modernising but not at the expense of closing leisure centres."

Tracy Wood, a former councillor who is leading the campaign against closure said the council should listen to the hundreds opposed to closing the centres. She added: "These centres are vital in our communities – especially Halesowen and Stourbridge."

# Daughter's floral tribute to mother and brother

A HEARTBROKEN daughter made an emotional return to her Stourbridge home to lay flowers in memory of her mother and younger brother, who were stabbed to death in an horrific incident last week.

Student Lydia Wilkinson, aged 18, fought back the tears as she laid a pot of flowers outside her family home in Greyhound Lane, Norton, on Sunday.

Her message said: "You are incredible. We love you more than words can ever describe and are so proud of you. I hope there's a Chanel store up there for you mom."

She took her time to read the dozens of messages left by well-wishers outside the house.

Just days before, while Lydia was studying at the University of Bristol, her mother, brother and father were attacked at their home.

All three suffered serious stab wounds. Her mother Tracey, aged 50, was pronounced dead at the scene while Pierce, her 13-year-old brother, a West Bromwich Albion fan, died later in hospital.

### Caring

Lydia's father, 47-year-old Peter Wilkinson, a managing director at Asset International in Bilston, was seriously injured with stab wounds to his back and chest. He is in a stable condition in hospital and has been visited by his daughter.

She was too upset to speak to the Press during the visit arranged through West Midlands Police, but issued a statement paying tribute to her mother and her brother.

She said: "Our family is devastated at the loss of Tracey and Pierce. They were extremely loved by all of their family and friends."

"Pierce was a fun-loving, friendly and happy boy, who loved computer games and made everyone smile. Tracey was loving, caring and a wonderful mother and daughter, always putting others before herself."

Lydia was comforted by her boyfriend Will Thompson and his family, who also laid flowers at the scene, next to the scores of tributes left by devastated friends and neighbours.

Aaron Barley, 23, has been charged with murder and attempted murder. It had been previously reported that Barley, of no fixed address, had been taken in by the Wilkinson family. Lydia strenuously denied this. She said: "The family did not provide refuge for homeless people and the suspect had never lived at the family home, but had been assisted by the family in the past 12 months."



Brave Lydia brings flowers to her family home where her brother and mother were fatally injured



Lydia with brother Pierce and father Peter



Suspect Aaron Bailey, picture from Facebook

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# COUNTY NEWS

## Tourism sector being hit hard

IT'S tough going in the tourism and hospitality business in the West Midlands at the moment, according to a new report. Rising inflation hitting household spending and risks over Brexit are thought to be behind the uncertain outlook.

Latest figures suggest one in three operators in the local tourism industry has an above average risk of insolvency – the highest figure for any UK region. The statistics form part of insolvency and restructuring body R3's monthly sector tracking report.

However, the construction sector is among the most stable in the UK.

## Region's brews part of range

A PAIR of Black Country breweries are among local suppliers who will have their products sold at Midlands Co-operative food shops in the West Midlands. The retailer operates 43 shops in the region and is to offer more than 70 new products from 25 drinks producers.

The local beers, ciders and ales include drinks produced in the Midlands, with bottled beers from Sadler's Ales in Lye and Holden's Brewery at Woodsetton. Bewdley Brewery in Worcestershire is also featured in the Best of Our Counties range.

## Declutter call to help charity

NEARLY a third of people in the West Midlands feel guilty about the amount of money spent on shopping trips, according to the British Heart Foundation in its Spring Clear Out campaign.

In a survey of more than 2,000 UK adults, secrets across the area were revealed, with men and women hanging onto an average of six items each that no longer fit. The BHF have released the statistics to encourage everyone to declutter and donate unwanted items to their local BHF shop.

## Crews fired up for learning at college

FIREFIGHTERS have gone back to school to brush up their knowledge of the health and social care in order to help vulnerable people.

A total of 17 staff from fire stations in Wolverhampton, Fallings Park and West Bromwich have learnt about infection control, mental health conditions, safeguarding, and equality and diversity so they can respond to certain non-emergency calls.

They have been taught by tutors from City of Wolverhampton College.

## Mothers' messages

MORE than a thousand people descended on Drayton Manor Park to mark Mother's Day and achieve a Guinness world record in the process.

A total of 1,139 people wrote heartfelt 'messages to mum', on a giant cork board, breaking the record for the most contributions to a bulletin board.

# Potholes: How you stand legally if you need to go for compensation

COUNCILS across the Black Country and Staffordshire are paying out tens of thousands of pounds in compensation as motorists pay the price for the region's potholed roads.

Andy Shaw, partner in the Personal Injury team at Higgs & Sons, sets out the legal position for motorists.

Under Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 the authority has a duty to maintain the highway. In considering whether the Highways Authority has breached its duty, the courts will consider

a) The character of the highway, and the traffic which would reasonably be expected to use it

b) The standard of maintenance appropriate, taking into consideration the type of traffic which might use it

c) The state of repair in which a reasonable person would expect to find the highway

d) Whether the highway authority knew or could reasonably have known that the condition of the part of the highway was dangerous

To succeed in a claim for damages for repairs costs or personal injury, a person must prove the highway was in such a condition that it was dangerous to traffic or pedestrians, that the condition was created by the failure to maintain the highway and the injury or damage resulted from such a failure. Whether a pothole is dangerous is open to judicial interpretation. The court will consider the size of the defect and where it was located.

If the claimant is able to prove that the pothole was dangerous, the burden falls on the defendant

to prove that they have a defence under Section 58 Highways Act 1980.

If the local authority can prove that they had a reasonable system of inspection and maintenance, they will establish a defence and any claim for damage or personal injury will fail.

Claims for damage are not straightforward and can be difficult to win, particularly if the Local Authority have an adequate inspection and maintenance policy. The burden is on the person making the claim to prove their case.

Anyone wishing to take action should get evidence – photographs ideally taken with a ruler showing the size and nature of the pothole are essential. Report the pothole. A failure by the local authority to repair the defect promptly may help your case.

# Hole lot of problems



Village problems – Mark Keegan sent pictures of potholes in Station Road, Common Road and Giggety Lane, just some of the many in Wombourne



Andrew Duff took this picture of Wergs Hall Road in Wolverhampton



Twitter picture of pothole in Carlisle Road from @SteveCannock



D J Baker took this picture in Buchanan Avenue, Walsall



Nick Hodgkinson has nominated the A491 through Kingswinford

WITH increasing anger over the state of our roads and councils spending tens of thousands in compensation to drivers, we asked readers to highlight some of the worst potholes in our region.

And we have been overwhelmed by the response with some shocking pictures arriving of small craters in our road network.

A damning report last week revealed that some £1.25 billion is needed to get roads in the West Midlands back into a reasonable condition with one in six needing to be repaired or even facing closure within the next five years. The Annual Local Author-



ity Road Maintenance survey blamed an ageing network, decades of underfunding, increased traffic and wetter winters for the problems.

The Chronicle also revealed last week that some £270,000 has been paid out in compensation to drivers over the last four years by Staffordshire County Council alone.

Given the reports we have received from readers across the whole of Staffordshire and the Black Country, our crumbling roads are peppered

with potholes. Nick Hodgkinson sent pictures from a stretch of the A491 which he said was badly damaged 'along its whole length between the Wall Heath island through Kingswinford, where it is particularly bad, then out into Wordsley and Amblecote.'

Mark Keegan highlighted potholes in Station Road, Common Road and Giggety Lane in Wombourne. He said: "The ones with the drains are quite dangerous for cyclists."

Andrew Duffy sent in a picture of a wide pothole in Wergs Hall Road in Wolverhampton and even dropped a newspaper in to illustrate the size.

Another crater was sent to us on Twitter showing a pothole in Carlisle Road on the Longford Estate in Cannock. While reader Tracy Taylor

flagged up problems in Broad Lane, Bloxwich.

Neil Sheldon, of Halesowen, contacted us to say: "In my job as a Trainer Assessor I now travel all over the West Midlands and I can testify that I have never seen the road network in such a bad condition."

The Chronicle wants to identify the top 10 pothole blackspots in the region to flag up to our councils and we need your help. If you know of any pothole-ridden routes or deep holes please let us know. You can email details of the road, preferably with a picture, your name and any comments you would like to make to Sue. Attwater@expressandstar.co.uk

Or drop us a line at Editorial, The Chronicles, 51-53 Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

# Teen thug stabbed his pregnant girlfriend

A TEENAGER who stabbed his pregnant girlfriend up to nine times in a frenzied attack has been sentenced to four years' detention.

The 17-year-old knifed the girl repeatedly in Dudley after punching her twice in the face. The victim staggered down two flights of stairs to try to find help, leaving a large trail of blood. She thought she was going to die, a judge was told.

She went on to lose her baby, though the court was told there was no medical evidence linking that to the stabbing – but Judge Michael Challinor said such a severe attack would not have helped.

The boy, who cannot be named because of his age, was sentenced at Wolverhampton Crown Court on Friday after admitting causing grievous bodily harm with intent.

The stabbing was the culmination of a violent on-off relationship, in which the girl had previously been punched and kicked by the youth.

The victim suffered stab wounds to her chest, abdomen and arm and spent four days in hospital.

Mr John Evans, defending: "What he did was undoubtedly a product of an horrific childhood in care which left him craving affection."

Judge Challinor said the boy, who had moved around the care system since the age of five, needed to be 'confined for a period of time' to mature. He said: "The injuries were so serious her life was in danger. This attack will undoubtedly continue to echo through for the rest of her life."

## Starter homes get green light

DUDLEY Council has been given the green light to build 79 starter homes on the former sites of community centres and a care home.

The homes, to be built on the former sites of the Mere Centre in Stourbridge, Turner House at Wrens Nest, Dudley, and St Thomas Network in Dudley, and Amblecote House care home, will be aimed at first-time buyers to help them get on the property ladder.

The authority was granted £625,000 in funding under the Government's Starter Homes scheme which will see the land regenerated. The buildings have already been demolished.

It is hoped work on the homes will begin by the end of the year after the plan was approved by council planning officers.

## Off-road motorbikers are warned by police

EIGHT people have been issued warnings for riding off-road motorbikes in the Stourton area, near Stourbridge. The riders were warned over 'riding in an anti-social manner'. Kinver Police tweeted: "If they are caught doing so again their bikes will be seized."

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NEWS IN BRIEF

## Road scheme is nearly complete

A £1.5 million scheme to improve a busy junction between Wolverhampton and Dudley is nearing completion. Roadworks have been ongoing at the junction between Birmingham New Road and Shaw Road since August last year.

Since January this has involved a complete closure of Shaw Road and Birmingham New Road being reduced to one lane in both directions.

Shaw Road has now reopened but off-peak lane closures will remain on Birmingham New Road until around Easter.

## Historic costumes on display at hall

A NEW exhibition at Himley Hall is a showcase for outfits used in historical re-enactments all over the country.

Costume & Kit: A Step back in Time featuring historic costumes and equipment has been loaned to the Dudley Council venue by members of the Harvington Household, who are based at Harvington Hall, near Kidderminster.

They cover a wide number of historical periods, from Saxon times to the Second World War.

The exhibition will run at Himley Hall until June 25. For opening times see [www.dudley.gov.uk/himleyhall](http://www.dudley.gov.uk/himleyhall)

## Roll up! Circus big top is on the way

JOHN Lawson's Circus is to pitch its big top at Webbs garden centre in West Hagley, near Stourbridge, from Saturday to Thursday, April 8 to 12.

The show will feature acrobats, jugglers, rollerskaters and Bippo the Clown. Ringmaster Attila Endresz will welcome visitors to the hour-long family show, which is a traditional circus but with no animal acts. Shows at 10.30am, 1pm or 3pm and tickets costs £6. Visit [webbsdirec.co.uk/circus](http://webbsdirec.co.uk/circus) for more details.

## Praise as young poets are published online

THE literary works of pupils at a Stourbridge primary school, inspired by the plight of refugees, are receiving praise after being published online.

We All Sleep Under The Stars is a book of illustrated poems created by Year 6 pupils at Greenfield Primary School. Around 40 children, aged 10 and 11, put pen to paper as part of the special initiative organised by the Letterpress Project, a not-for-profit organisation.

Go to [www.letterpressproject.co.uk](http://www.letterpressproject.co.uk)

## Cheers! Chain buy pub

A GROWING Black Country pub chain has added another pub to its books in Stourbridge.

Black Country Ales, the Pensnett-based micro-brewery and real ale pub company, has agreed terms to purchase The Queen's Head in Envile Street.

## Nearly 100 homes are proposed for industry site

PART of a disused industrial estate in Stourbridge is set to make way for nearly 100 homes.

Apartments would be created on former Jubilee Works and the William Foxall site in a bid to 'upgrade the area'.

The site in Balds Lane, Lye, could see up to 51 houses and 39 apartments developed with parking. It comes as businesses on the site are to relocate, leaving the three-acre plot empty.

There is proposed to be 22 semi-detached and 29 terraced houses alongside 39 apartments in three separate three-storey buildings.

Planning documents, put forward by RDI Developments, say: "The scheme applies the principles of good urban design and would make a positive contribution to character and appearance of the area, with no unacceptable adverse impact on residential amenity."

"Each of the proposed dwellings is served by a private garden. It would provide a high quality residential development upgrading the area... that will benefit the community from a social and economic standpoint."

However, Councillor Richard Body, who represents Cradley and Wollescote ward, said that traffic problems would need to be assessed before the plans were approved.

Traffic-based objections were put forward by residents and nearby businesses, describing Balds Lane as 'a rat run' where speeding took place.

A decision will be made by planning bosses in the coming weeks.

## First business in enterprise zone

THE first business has signed up to join a new multi-million enterprise zone in Brierley Hill.

Insurance Protector Group has agreed to become part of the DY5 zone, the first arrival since the enterprise zone at The Waterfront was given the go-ahead by Government.

The business and enterprise zone is expected to bring 7,000 jobs and it is hoped many other businesses will follow and take advantage of tax breaks that the zone offers.

Alan Lunt, strategic director for regeneration at Dudley Council said: "It will provide fantastic opportunities for businesses, big and small, to expand as they benefit from reduced business rates or tax breaks for purchasing machinery."

## Vineyard food and drink festival

HALFPENNY Green Vineyards is holding a food and wine festival this summer.

The event at the site in Tom Lane, near Bobbington, will be on June 10, as part of English Wine Week.

# Bosses told to shell out after snail row

SNAILS are at the centre of a bizarre row between shopping centre bosses and Dudley Council.

Owners of the Trident Centre in Dudley town centre have been accused of using snail farming to avoid paying business rates on one of its units.

Some firms are eligible for tax exemptions if buildings are being used for agricultural purposes.

After investigating, local authority chiefs were not happy where the trail led them and took owners of the High Street complex, Atlantis Holdings, to court.

Magistrates ruled in favour of the authority but Atlantis deny any wrongdoing.

John Sykes, chairman of Atlantis, said a tenant was using part of the sixth floor of the centre to

breed snails and the firm would be fighting the ruling. He insisted that Atlantis had shelled out tens of thousands of pounds in business rates and would never try to avoid paying tax owed.

He said: "We have never tried to and never would avoid business rates. This is an ongoing legal matter and another example of the council trying to muddy the water. It is a travesty."

The total amount currently owed to the council in relation to the unit is £11,496.83. This is made up of unpaid business rates and court costs and relates to a period between June 2015 and March this year.

The council's chief executive Sarah Norman said: "Atlantis Holdings were seeking to avoid payment of business rates on a building owned by them, by

representing to the council that a tenant company was in occupation.

"That tenant company was allegedly breeding snails in the building. This was not accepted by the council and in a court case against Atlantis before Dudley Magistrates in February 2017, a liability order was granted in the council's favour."

"Since then we have expressed our willingness to work with Atlantis and its regeneration proposals. However, Dudley Council has a duty to collect business rates from local businesses."

It comes after Trident Centre bosses revealed they were pulling the plug on proposed redevelopment of the centre over what they called a lack of dialogue with the council.

# Well, that's a fine film to get yourself into!

PEOPLE in the Black Country have an opportunity to star in a movie about vintage comedy double act Laurel and Hardy, alongside modern day stars Steve Coogan and John C Reilly.

The feature film focusing on the iconic two-some's final tour, which brought the comedy legends to the Black Country, is to be partly shot in Dudley.

Alan Partridge star Coogan will play Lancashire-born Stan Laurel and American actor Reilly, who starred in Chicago and more recently in Kong: Skull Island, will appear as Oliver Hardy in Stan and Ollie, which is being made by the BBC.

Details of the filming in Dudley are being kept under wraps but it is possible the decision to come to the town could be linked to the famous Hippodrome theatre, where the duo appeared in 1947 and again in 1952 - staying across the road at the Station Hotel.

The theatre on Castle Hill, which was later turned into a bingo hall then left unused, is currently the subject of a fundraising campaign to refurbish and reopen it as a venue again - to be called the Black Country Hippodrome - after being saved from demolition.

Stan and Ollie has been written by Jeff Pope, who worked with Coogan on the Oscar-nominated Philomena, and chronicles the duo's final British tour, during which Hardy suffered a heart attack.

Laurel and Hardy burst onto the Hollywood scene in the 1920s, appearing in more than 100 films together, becoming screen icons known and loved across the world. They performed together for more than 30 years.

### Stage

Filming will also take place in Birmingham, where the duo also appeared on stage, and in Bristol.

An advert posted on [castingcoollective.co.uk](http://castingcoollective.co.uk) said: "Men and women of all ages for filming in Birmingham and Dudley for a major feature film about Laurel and Hardy set in the 1950s. You must be over 16, legally allowed to work in the UK with National Insurance number. Good rates of pay."

The comedy duo appeared in the pages of the Express & Star following their appearance at Dudley Hippodrome in 1947, in which they were said to have 'rocked the packed house'.

Meanwhile, Steve Coogan is about to be reunited with fellow comic Rob Bryden for the latest series of their award-winning comedy/travel series The Trip. Being shown on Sky Atlantic, it will see the pair eat and bicker their way across Spain.



Vintage comedy heroes Laurel and Hardy came to Dudley Hippodrome in the latter years of their career



Steve Coogan, TV's Alan Partridge, to play Stan Laurel



Landmark being renamed Black Country Hippodrome

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## IN MY VIEW

with Mark Andrews



# It's just the ticket for winding up wardens

A PARKING company has been working overtime in Birmingham, plastering a battered old Hyundai with 26 fixed penalty notices, worth £100 a time – at least 10 times what the car is worth.

It's not often that I feel much sympathy with traffic wardens, but on this occasion they have a point.

It must be a bit annoying if people just abandon old bangers on your property, with no legal way of getting them removed.

I don't suppose they will see any of the £2,600 they are seeking, but slapping on a fresh ticket each day probably brightens up the monotony of the job.

Besides, it's also given me a great idea of how to beat the wardens at their own game. While I don't normally advocate using pay-and-display car parks, there are occasions when there is no choice. Such as when you're in a strange town, and you don't know where the nearest back street with unlimited free parking is.

The important thing is that every time you use one of these car parks, make sure you hang on to the old ticket. And when you have built up a sizeable collection, stick every one on the windscreen every time you park.

Of course, you will still have to buy a ticket each time you park, but imagine making the warden check the dates of 20 different tickets. Almost worth the cost of buying the ticket in the first place.

□ □ □

SIR Dave Brailsford has been accused of presiding over a bullying culture during his time at the helm of British Cycling, pursuing a "win-at-all-costs" mentality.

This was followed by the chairman of UK Athletics, Ed Warner, saying that Britain puts too much focus on winning medals. Presumably, the England football team's in the clear, then?

□ □ □

THE chief constable of West Midlands Police has rallied against proposals for future police chiefs to be recruited from non-police backgrounds.

Dave Thompson said such a move would be "unthinkable", questioning whether outsiders would have the experience or knowledge required.

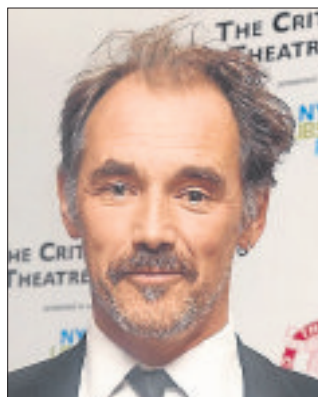
Totally agree. It would like, well, an MP with no journalistic experience becoming editor of a major newspaper, wouldn't it?

□ □ □

A SHOPPING centre in Dudley has been accused of dodging rates by claiming that a unit on its sixth floor is a snail farm.

Two questions: (1) how hard can it be to establish the presence or otherwise of a snail farm? If the place is teeming with shelled molluscs, it probably is one, if not, it's not. (2) Who in their right mind would want to breed snails, apart from, perhaps, the manufacturers of slug pellets?

## Headlines could apply to any country JOINING the EU



Mark Rylance – supports questions over income tax exemptions



Jean-Claude Juncker – led the hand-wringing over UK leaving the EU



Nicola Sturgeon – angry over delay over a Scottish referendum

# Leap in the dark, that was many years ago

INTO the abyss. On the edge of the unknown. A leap in the dark. Have you noticed how all the apocalyptic headlines about Britain leaving the EU could be just as well applied to any country joining the EU?

INDEED, history may record that Britain's greatest gift to Europe was to warn the nations now queuing up to join the EU that getting out is not a simple matter, as we were assured for 40 years, but well-nigh impossible. Once you're in, you're in and before the welcoming fanfares are even over, the gates are firmly locked behind you.

THEY still don't get it, do they? Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker led the hand-wringing and breast-beating as the European Union celebrated its 60th birthday without Britain. It was, he declared, a tragedy that the UK was leaving. Reality check, please. The whole point is that we are not leaving the organisation we joined back in 1973. The UK signed up to a free-trade area. We ended up as an unwilling member of an undemocratic 28-nation European superstate. Brussels changed the rules, not us. That's why we are quitting. And we won't be the last.

WHO will blink first in the titanic battle of the Amazons raging over Scottish independence?

Here are two obdurate women, neither of whom are given to retreating, in eyeball-to-eyeball conflict over one of the great issues of the day, which will affect these islands for generations to come. Nicola Sturgeon, Scotland's First Minister, says Prime Minister Theresa May should not dare challenge the expected decision of the Scottish Parliament over an earlier, rather than a later, referendum on independence. May says a referendum cannot be countenanced until after Brexit. In short, never the twain shall meet.

## THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



I MUST be missing something in the raging civil-liberties row over an Englishman's right not to have his "end to end" encrypted emails deciphered by the authorities. For a start, what sort of person thinks he needs military-grade coding? Obviously, it's useful for adulterers, drug dealers and terrorists. But why would a normal, law-abiding person need it? It has only been available for a few years and presumably people managed perfectly well before it was invented. Secondly, if you really are dealing in life-or-death secrets, why would you take the risk, despite the maker's assurances, that end-to-end encryption will be secure for all time, and that neither the supplier, nor anyone else will try to unravel it? Thanks, but no thanks. When I go undercover I will rely on my trusty invisible ink, dead letter boxes and cryptic spy-greetings whispered on benches in Hyde Park. The corn grows tall in Vladivostok.

A DAILY Telegraph reader sees a peacock butterfly in late March and asks: "Is this a record?" Expect more of the same as readers everywhere report spring arrivals, from butterflies to cuckoos. They always end with the question: "Is this a record?" Every claim reminds me of the line from Round the Horne when a reader inquired: "Sir, I have a 12-inch grooved plastic disc with a hole in the middle. Is this a record?"

AN 80-something reader hits back at the report of old 'uns being wary of using cashpoints in case they hold up younger users. He tells another tale, of young 'uns causing the hold-ups:

"In goes the card and, oops, it's maxed out. He tries another card. Same result. Checks the account balance. Turns to his mate: 'Got your card?' Then the performance starts all over again."

I WROTE earlier this week about actor Mark Rylance supporting a tax system which would allow conscientious objectors not to pay income tax for defence spending. A reader writes: "In my view we should not be obliged to subsidise the arts from our taxes." Over to you, Mr Rylance.

"MERCATOR projection" may ring a bell from your school-days geography lessons. It is the commonest format used to portray the globe of the world as a flat map. Unfortunately, Mercator distorts the continents, shrinking Africa and enlarging Europe and North America. Schools in Massachusetts are now introducing maps based on the more accurate Peters projection. Pupils are reportedly astonished to discover how big Africa really is, and how much smaller is the United States. And our homeland? The British Isles appears as a little outcrop tucked away almost on the roof of the world. Such a tiny, insignificant place. So why does the rest of the world speak our language?

I BET there are huge savings to be made in the NHS by stopping doctors prescribing remedies which can be bought over the counter. The proposal, announced by NHS England, takes me back to a strange encounter with a doctor long ago when I had a sore throat. He was one of the old-school GPs; no eye-contact, little patience and much mumbling. "You could always try mumble-mumble," he mumbled. "Try what?" I asked. He sighed irritably, filled out a prescription form and handed it to me. It said "Strepsils." The Strepsils were cheaper at the chemist's than the cost of the prescription.

## TALKING POINT



# Bingo! I made grade by ticking right box

MANY years ago (all right, I confess, it was the early 1970s) I found myself facing a daunting challenge – trying to scrape a French O-level with only a rudimentary grasp of the language.

I'd done all right in class, with the help of the school's state-of-the-art language lab, a number of "personal" booths complete with tape recorders, allowing pupils to work at their own pace.

The exam itself, however, was a different matter. How would I be able to remember all those male/female nouns, verbs and accents? But wait, help was at hand in the shape of a series of multiple-choice questions, or "bingo papers" as they were known among us pupils.

I'll come to how I fared in a moment, but first let me explain how I came to recall that experience of pinning my hopes on ticking enough correct boxes in order to gain an educational qualification.

Just recently, I was filling in an application form online, only to find that I was prevented from clicking through to the next page by an ominous message telling me that my attempts so far were invalid, or words to that effect.

Luckily, I noticed on scrolling to the top of the page that another message informed me the passwords I had entered were wrong, so I checked them carefully, only to find I had typed them exactly as I had written them down.

After several minutes of re-entering these infuriating codes, I was on the verge of giving up and going back to the tried and tested method of pen and paper, when I had a brainwave: check that I'd written the passwords down correctly. Doh! I'd written down one bit wrong.

I was able to sail through the rest of the application process. All this started me thinking: have we become so reliant on ticking boxes online that we've lost our powers of logic? So many websites these days seem at least half-a-dozen clicks of the mouse ahead of the user. Type in your postcode and you'll be offered a list of the houses in your street.

And if you've used that website previously, it can be most alarming when, on being asked for your email address, you only have to offer up the first letter and the site will do the rest.

Then there's the conundrum of having to distinguish the letter O from the figure zero when asked to type in a security code, not forgetting the crazy notion that we automatically know whether to put spaces in, say, a phone number or 16-digit bank card number – and only after we've navigated the "Would you care to take our survey?" page.

I've decided we're just not up to any of this yet, especially as coming up with a "strong" password with a specified number of symbols, characters, both upper and lower case, and numerals can often take so long. As for the French O-level, I got a (very low-grade) pass. Bingo!

STEVE PARLETT

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# No place for word 'war' in Brexit rhetoric

SO Theresa has finally set the date for invoking Article 50. I predict that the next strategy which the Hard Brexiters will employ will be to generate bitterness, ill-feeling and animosity between the ordinary people of Britain and the ordinary people of Europe.

The strategy is already getting under way with Philip Hammond's provocative and belligerent statements - 'we won't shrink from Brexit war', 'the British people have a great fighting spirit' and 'the UK will not slink off like a wounded animal'.

Who is he to speak for the UK when

it looks as if the United Kingdom may not be united much longer thanks to the machinations of the aggressive Hard Brexit minority? Has anyone in Europe used such inflammatory language and the word 'war'?

We voted to give up the privileges of being in the EU, they did not vote to expel us. Quite the contrary, they begged us to stay, united.

If you resign from a club you cannot then accuse the club of punishing you because you no longer enjoy its privileges. Get real!

I can only hope that the ordinary

people of Britain and Europe will quietly go about their business, continue trying to promote international fellowship and resist the propaganda which the militants will be pouring out. The ordinary UK citizens are now being bullied by a vociferous minority and forced to go in a direction which most of them did not choose.

I hope that we don't wake up in a couple of years to find that we have sunk the ship to stop any more refugees climbing aboard.

**ROBERT PERRY, RBSA**  
Stourbridge

## Where does NHS pledge come from?

COMMENTING on the under-funding of the NHS, several correspondents have repeated the claim which has been persistently and, in my opinion, erroneously made in the wider media.

It claims that an undertaking was given by pro-Brexit politicians that in the event of our leaving Europe our £53 million daily contribution to the EU budget would be used to fund the NHS.

However, having closely followed the run-up to the Referendum, its aftermath and subsequent events, I cannot recall one single politician stating that all, or even most, of this money would be directed to the NHS, much as it may need it.

It would appear that this wonderful piece of wishful thinking is simply being used by the Remoaners as a rather floppy and ineffective stick with which to beat the Brexiters.

**B WILLIAMS**  
Dudley

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### POST

Dudley Chronicle,  
Chronicle Editorial,  
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Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

### EMAIL

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expressandstar.co.uk

Code of Practice: Our policy is to correct errors as soon as we can. The Chronicles adhere to the Editors' Code of Practice, which can be seen at

## Blot on the town centre landscape

PEOPLE of Dudley, I would advise you not to get too excited over the transformation Dudley Council has planned for the Birdcage Walk shopping area.

If it takes anywhere near as long as the Cavendish House agenda, it will be a long way off. From every angle, Cavendish House is a disgrace - the bypass, Castle Hill and Birdcage Walk itself all give a disgusting view.

Don't anyone suggest it has only been evacuated for five years. By my reckoning it must be 20 years plus. This building is a blot on the landscape and so many headlines have been suggested for improvements which never come about.

I despair, but then again the council is so busy with out-of-town developments, how can it find time for Dudley town centre?

**MRS L SHELTON**  
Dudley

## It's time to scrap the TV licence

ALMOST 109,000 people have signed the petition to debate in Parliament that it is time to scrap the annual TV licence.

At £145 it is now very expensive especially for elderly people who have fixed incomes. In this day and age it is an out-dated sum of money for people to find year in, year out.

Television, for some elderly people and those who are single, is the only means they have for entertainment. It is time for the BBC to take the responsibility and make its corporation pay its own way, like all of the other television companies have too.

Television programmes could have sponsors and why can't the BBC advertise in order to make money?

It would certainly mean they would have to trim down the enormous salaries paid out. And staff would need to be trimmed down as well.

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The Chronicles have teamed up with the organisers to offer 30 of our readers the chance to win a pair of tickets. These will be valid any day except Saturday.

So much on offer, the five gardens in the APL avenue offer take-home ideas, while a range of flora is on show across the Floral Marquee and a series of Show Gardens. The BBC Gardeners' World Live Theatre features

appearances by celebrities such as TV gardeners Monty Don and Alan Titchmarsh. The new series of the Gardeners' World TV programme has started with a feature on the Golden Jubilee Award Plant, to find the plant that has had the biggest impact on gardens in the last 50 years. The winning plant will be announced at BBC Gardeners' World Live on Thursday, June 15.

There will be a host of anniversary features planned including an 'Anniversary Garden' designed by the eminent Professor David Stevens, the 'Nostalgia Garden' by Paul Stone and birthday cake created exclusively by Nadiya Hussain and much more.

The BBC TV team will be filming live from the Show on Thursday, June 15 as part of a special one-hour anniversary Gardeners' World programme airing on BBC2 on the following day whilst the NEC event is in full swing.



### HOW TO ENTER

To stand a chance of winning a pair of tickets simply answer the following question.

### Where is BBC Gardeners' World Live held?

Send your entry on a postcard with your name, address and email address to Garden Show competition, Chronicle editorial, 51-53 Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES. Closing date: Thursday, April 14. The tickets will be sent via email but are not valid for Saturday show.



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# Royal visit to chapels and hospice day centre

THE Duke of Gloucester helped a hospice mark a special milestone when he visited patients and staff before officially opening a refurbished chapel in the Black Country.

Prince Richard is the youngest grandchild of King George V and Queen Mary, so is the Queen's cousin.

The Duke dropped into Compton Hospice in Compton, Wolverhampton, as part of its year-long 35th anniversary celebrations.

The Duke, who is the Queen's cousin, was greeted by staff, patients and family members as he made his way into the Woods Day Therapy Centre and Inpatient Unit before cutting a cake made to mark the visit.

During his tour of the hospice on Tuesday, the Duke said: "I congratulate those who play a part in hospice care and the patients who come here. I hope they find the comfort that they need when they arrive at this splendid place with its lovely gardens and smiling faces."

## Chatted

The royal visitor also chatted with the hospice's director of nursing, Jackie Kelly, medical director Dr Deborah Pearson and receptionist Jean Johnson, who has volunteered at the facility since it opened.

Claire Marshall, chief executive at the hospice, said: "It was an absolute honour to welcome HRH The Duke of Gloucester to the hospice during our 35th anniversary year. The Duke of Gloucester previously visited the hospice in 2011 following a refurbishment of our Inpatient Unit and Outpatient facilities so it was lovely to show him how our services have developed during the last six years."



The Duke with day centre patient Michael Benton and volunteer Madeline Hadfield



The Duke with superintendent registrar Penny Fulford Photo: Jane Williams

Later the Duke visited the former Lye and Wollescote Chapels building in Stourbridge to mark its official opening following refurbishment.

Work on the Grade II-listed structure, which has been renamed The Thomas Robinson Building after the original architect, was completed in February last year and now houses Stourbridge Register Office.

During his visit, the Duke said: "I'm delighted to officially open the building. I wish the best of luck to all those who come here and I hope none of them get divorced subsequently."

The buildings were transformed in a £1m makeover. Penny Fulford, superintendent registrar at Dudley Council, said: "It's been wonderful and we're delighted to have had the Duke visit."

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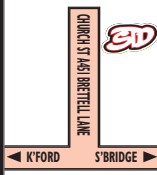
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# Mayor awards honour community leaders

**COMMUNITY** leaders were recognised for their outstanding work by the Mayor of Dudley at his charity ball.

Councillor Mohammed Hanif handed out awards recognising those who have stood out in the fields of education, sport, environment and art, as well as community.

Hundreds attended the ball and civic awards at the Copthorne Hotel in Brierley Hill.

Councillor Hanif said it was a 'real honour' to have met the 'amazing' winners and celebrate their achievements.

Each winner was presented with handcrafted glass trophy and a certificate in recognition of their work in one of seven categories.

Shaz Saleem, from Dudley, won the coveted mayor's award after receiving the most votes in an online poll for his work promoting taxi safety and charity fund raising. Rose Cook, Keith Stroyde and the Diyya Project came runners-up and also received a glass award for their hard work.

## Edwards

The Duncan Edwards award for sport went to Andy Pountney, chairman of Stourbridge Town Football Club, in recognition of the club's success in the FA Cup. The runner-up was Mark Grazier who runs Hartshill Strollers Walking Football Club.

Lorna Morrison picked up the William Shenston award for environment, sponsored by Jessup Brothers, after impressing judges as chair of the Friends of March Park and Lawyers Field. Don Davies was runner-up for his work with the Woodsetton Charitable Trust.

The Thomas Attwood award for education, sponsored by The School Travel Company, went to Roger



The Mayor with Lorna Morrison



Mark Grazier with the Mayor



Shaz Saleem pictured with fellow guests at the mayor's ball and civic awards

Timmins, chairman of governors at the Brier School for 25 years. Alison Pell picked up the runner-up award as headteacher at Hawbush Primary School.

Sarah Andrews was awarded the Mike Holder award for business, sponsored by Dudley College, after setting up a company to deliver hot meals to the elderly. The runner-up award went to Olutayo Arikawe who provides a pharmacy service.

The Cedric Harwicke award for arts, sponsored by GMB Union, went to Jude Moreland who runs In-Sound Company Community Choir. Musi-

cian Gurchran Bhujhangy was the runner-up.

The Frank Foley award for community spirit, sponsored by Cushillo Personnel, went to Saleh Ali, chairman of the Highfields Tenants and Residents Association, while Vi Wood won the runners-up award for her work supporting the borough's homeless.

Thousands of pounds were raised from the awards, in association with A1 Rentals and Pro-tech Pavers, and will be split between the mayor's charities, which are Friends of Alfie Johnson, Diabetes UK Dudley branch and Dudley CIL.

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# 14 Record low for teen pregnancies

TEENAGE pregnancies in the West Midlands have fallen to their lowest rate since records began.

Figures from the Office for National Statistics have revealed that with 23.7 conceptions for every 1,000 girls aged between 15 and 17, teenage pregnancies in the country are at their lowest levels since data was first gathered back in 1969.

Comparing the number of teenagers falling pregnant in the West Midlands from 2015 to 2014, there was an 11 per cent drop from 26.5 per 1,000 aged 15 to 17.

Furthermore it was down 54 per cent compared to the number of adolescents getting pregnant according to figures in 1998 when it was 51.7 per 1,000 aged 15 to 17.

Despite this, the number of teenagers falling pregnant in the West Midlands is still 17 per cent higher than in the East Midlands.

# Anti-social behaviour leads to more complaints in borough

**ANTI-SOCIAL** behaviour rose across Dudley borough last year, with hundreds of complaints over noise, rowdy youths and nuisance vehicles.

More than 2,000 incidents were reported across the borough between April and December last year.

The figures were revealed in a Dudley Council review of anti-social behaviour services.

More than 200 extra incidents of anti-social behaviour were reported both in the first quarter of the year, between April and June 2016, and the second quarter between July and September 2016, when compared to the same months

during the previous year. In total, between April and December 2016, there was a total of 2,201 incidents of anti-social behaviour reported to the council's dedicated response team.

Between April and June 2015 there were 605 reports of antisocial behaviour, compared to 821 in April and June 2016. While between July and September 2016, there were 856 antisocial behaviour cases, up from 615 in July and September 2015.

## Action

The report also detailed the action taken against the culprits with warning letters issued in 219 cases, and 133 referred to agencies such

as the police between April 2016 and February this year.

Four became subject to covert surveillance in a bid to tackle the problems, but only one incident of nuisance behaviour saw an eviction notice obtained.

Examples of anti-social activity reported to Dudley Council included noise and vehicle nuisance, drug issues, rowdy behaviour, intimidation, harassment and the threat or use of violence, criminal damage, vandalism and littering.

The report presented to Dudley Council's overview and scrutiny management board last week also noted how new powers introduced with the Crime & Policing Act 2014, had helped to tackle anti-social behaviour.

## Go behind the scenes at SVR

THIRTY models railways will be laid out for visitors during an open house weekend at the Severn Valley Railway.

Visitors can pop by the steam rail line, which runs between Bridgnorth and Kidderminster, this weekend (April 8 and 9).

Models will be on display in Kidderminster Diesel Depot and The Engine House in Highley.

There will also be behind the scenes tours and the opportunity for potential volunteers to find out how to get involved.

Bridgnorth Locomotive Works and Bewdley Yard, as well as Bridgnorth, Bewdley North and Kidderminster signalboxes will also be open to visitors.

For further information about the open weekend visit [www.svr.co.uk](http://www.svr.co.uk) or call 01562 757900.

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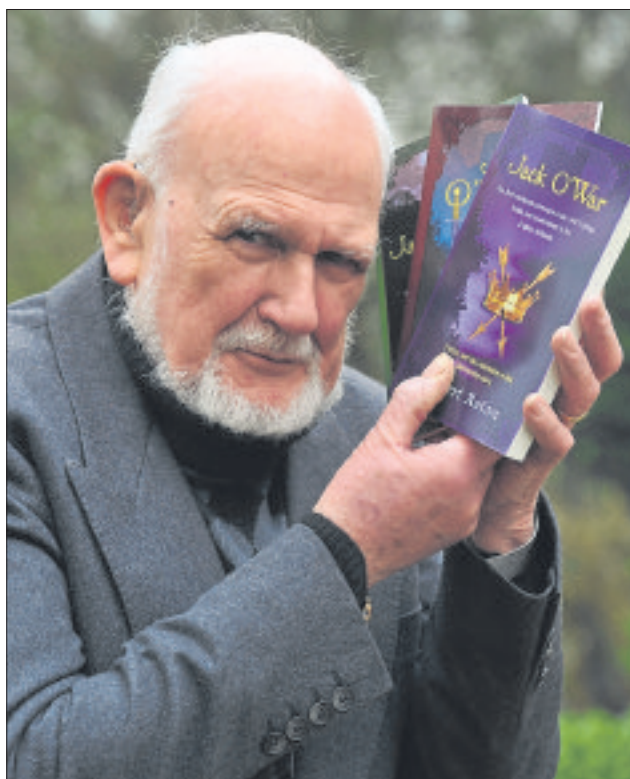
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## Jack's back in third novel



Author Robert Aston with his latest novel Jack O'War, third of the Jack O'Dudley books

AN AUTHOR has had the latest book in his trilogy of historical novels set in the Black Country published.

Robert Aston, from Coseley, has penned the latest instalment of his medieval adventures, called Jack O'War, centred an archer at Dudley Castle.

The story, set in the 1300s, uses the old Middle English language in parts, a vernacular thought to be closely associated with the Black Country dialect.

Mr Aston said it was a relief to get the book released after a frustrating period dealing with publishers.

The 78-year-old said: "It's been a struggle to get these books out, with companies going bust, back and forth with the editors, but I'm deeply indebted to them as the stories have developed over the extra waiting period."

Mr Aston has spent most of his life in the Black Country, although he was born in Oxford.

His mother died when Mr Aston was six-years-old and his father went to Australia, leaving Mr Aston under the care of his grandmother in Dudley.

He started work on the latest Jack O'Dudley book in 2014 and it completes the trilogy after Jack O'Beans and Jack O'Knives.

The books have all been inspired by the history of Dudley and take place primarily in the town, its castle and priory.

Dudley Library also played a significant part in the development of the books by Mr Aston.

He added: "I did a creative writing course there when I retired in 2003, which is when the Jack character was developed."

## £10m investment as engineers race ahead

## Cash could go up in smoke

STUDENTS are enjoying life in the fast lane thanks to a £10 million investment in engineering.

A new engineering school has been unveiled at the University of Wolverhampton's Telford Innovation Campus, where the ribbon was also cut to launch its new racing car to take part in this year's F3 season.

The newly refurbished building was opened by the Chancellor of the university, Lord Paul Swraj, founder of the Caparo Group, following a manufacturing and engineering conference.

Speaking at the ceremony, Punjab-born Chancellor Lord Paul of Marylebone, said: "When I came to this country in the 1960s and started work, British manufacturing was 40 per cent of the total growth. It is now less than 10 per cent. So it gives me great pleasure to see this establishment of engineering and knowing that the team behind it are so enthusiastic."

RESIDENTS and businesses using unauthorised fuel could face fines of up to £1,000. Dudley Council is proposing to introduce a borough-wide smoke control order to tackle pollution.

The new order will make it an offence to emit smoke from the chimney of any home or business, unless residents can prove they are using authorised environment-friendly fuels. The order will also make it an offence to sell unauthorised fuel but there are some exemptions.



## More pressure on hospital A&E

AN EXTRA 2,500 ambulances arrived at Dudley's main hospital last year, piling pressure on staff.

Figures showed the amount of ambulances bringing patients to Russells Hall rose every month between May 2016 and January 2017 compared to the same period 12 months earlier.

During that period, the hospital had to deal with an extra 2,588 ambulances – more than 200 a month on average.

The Dudley hospital experienced one of its busiest ever winters, which saw bosses forced to warn people only to attend if they had a serious condition.

The huge ambulance numbers are the latest indicator of severe pressure the unit has been under. The number of ambulances arriving at the hospital peaked in December with a total of 3,668 pulling up at A&E.

Data also showed hundreds of patients were readmitted within 28 days of leaving hospital.

## Simple pleasures for park's meerkats



Eggs-citing discovery for the safari park's meerkats

EVEN the meerkats get Easter eggs at the West Midland Safari Park.

Keepers hide food in empty ostrich eggs, filling papier-mache eggs with treats such as meal worms, and decorate hard boiled chicken eggs and hide them in the enclosure.

Beth Cheshire, African village keeper at the attraction near Kidderminster, said: "Meerkats love eggs, so Easter is probably their favourite time of the year. In the wild they will climb up to bird's nests to steal and eat the eggs, so will go to great lengths to find the treats we hide in their enclosure."

The zoo has a host of events planned for its Easter Egg-stravaganza, including an Egg-splorer's Trail, craft club, themed shows, encounters and competitions.

Easter activities are included in the admission charge of £23 for adults, £18 children aged 3-15 and £21 concessions. Children under three are admitted free. Admission includes a voucher for a return visit or safari gift. Theme park rides are extra. See the park's website [www.wmsp.co.uk](http://www.wmsp.co.uk)

## Cheers! Breweries secure Co-op deal

BLACK Country breweries are among local suppliers who will have their products sold at Midcounties Co-operative food shops in the West Midlands.

The retailer operates 43 shops in the region and is to offer more than 70 new products from 25 drinks producers across the area to its customers.

The new local beers, ciders and ales range includes drinks that are produced in the Midlands. Included are bottled beers from Sadler's Ales in Lye and Holden's Brewery at Woodsetton. Bewdley Brewery in Worcestershire is also featured as part of Midcounties' Best of Our Counties range.

Ian King, sales director at Sadler's Ales, said: "We've been working closely with The Midcounties Co-operative's local food team who have been very supportive in helping us to introduce our products to more people in the West Midlands."

# Pride and touch of sadness at soldiers' potential last march

**SCORES of proud former soldiers will reaffirm their freedom of Kidderminster by marching through the town next month – possibly for the last time.**

The parade will also mark the 50th anniversary of the formation of 1st Battalion Mercian Volunteers and the disbandment of the 7th Battalion Worcestershire Regiment.

It is being organised by the Mercian Volunteers Regimental Association, which maintains its traditions while

also looking after those who served with the Territorial Army unit.

They are among 500 members drawn from the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the Mercian Volunteers, the Worcestershire and Staffordshire companies of the light infantry, together with successor units.

One member, Andy Williams, is coming from his home in America to take part while others are travelling from as far as Scotland.

Lt Col (retired) Keith Jeavons, a company commander at Kidderminster during 32 years service with the TA, is the association's secretary and treasurer.

He said: "There will be a lot of pride on show at the parade but it will be tinged with a little sadness because this will probably be the last time we do this because of our age. I am 80 and there are many older than me."

The Regimental Association, which also has members from the Black Country and South Staffordshire, will be joined by serving members of the armed forces, cadets and the Tenbury Wells Town band on the parade through the town on April 22. They will fall in at Batemans Yard car park at 11.30am and march at noon with the Drumhead ceremony and beating the retreat scheduled at 1.30pm.



Lt Col (retired) Keith Jeavons

## Easter fun at leisure centre

CHILDREN can take part in fun and games at the Crystal Leisure Centre in Stourbridge during the Easter holidays.

The Dudley Council facility in Bell Street will be hosting a fortnight of special activities from Saturday, April 8, to Sunday, April 23.

The swimming pool, with slides and rapids, is open every day. There will be a water disco on Fridays from 3.30pm.

Youngsters aged seven and under can use the soft play suite throughout the week. Qualified staff supervise but parents must remain with their children. Entrance costs £2.50 per child. An hour-long trampolining session for under-fives will run at 9am on April 11, 18 and 21 for £5 per child. There are also 'gym and play' sessions.

Visit [www.dudley.gov.uk/sport](http://www.dudley.gov.uk/sport) or call (01884) 812800.

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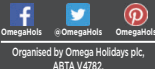
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# Phil's candid camera caught the Black Country

A COLLECTION of 52 photographs taken in the Black Country over a 30 year period is being displayed at Dudley's Himley Hall.

The pictures are by professional news photographer Phil Loach and they represent a wide range of events and incidents.

But all of them display a distinctive sense of place and purpose which is peculiar to the Black Country.

Shoppers in a blizzard, fish and chip diners and kids making a playground out of a building site are among the subjects which have attracted Phil's attention - along with visits by celebrities and ordinary people appearing in extraordinary situations.

Other pictures reveal dramatic changes that have taken place in the Black Country landscape allied to the huge decline in industry.

### Studied

Born in the Kates Hill area of Dudley in 1949, Phil studied photography at Leicester Polytechnic and then became a staff cameraman with the Dudley Herald. During the next 45 years he worked for other West Midlands newspaper groups. He is now a freelance photographer based in Tenbury Wells.

Alongside his press output Phil has always taken personal photographs and this new exhibition concentrates mainly on those images. He says: "Although I've had thousands of photos published over the years its really nice to see this collection of favourites that say something personal and meaningful about my time working around the Black Country."

The exhibition, entitled A Time It Was, opened on Saturday and runs Sunday, June 11. It is open every day except Mondays between 2pm and 5pm. For more information call Phil on 07392 323379.



News photographer Phil Loach is displaying his favourite pictures taken over a 30-year period



John Inman, star of TV sitcom Are You Being Served?, at the opening of a shop in Halesowen in 1975



Pow wow? A visitor and two exhibitors take a rest at Dudley Show in 1992

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# Museum will journey into the dinosaur age

A WALKWAY taking visitors on a journey through Dudley's history back to earliest geological times is being created at the town's archives centre.

The building, off Tipton Road, has undergone extensive building work to accommodate the items and artwork previously displayed at Dudley Museum and Art Gallery in St James's Road.

The museum and gallery closed in December as part of council cost-cutting moves.

Now building work has finished on converting part of the archives centre into a museum display space.

Cabinets and shelves are being put into place before items are brought out of storage to be put on show once again.

## Ambitious

One of the most exciting aspects of the ambitious plans is the addition of an animatronic dinosaur.

A large plinth has already been created to enable this Jurassic addition to take centre stage, ready for when this new public area opens in September.

The project is being overseen by Jane Lamine, business operations manager at Dudley Council. She

said: "It's very exciting. There's going to be a big animatronic dinosaur and a diorama about what it was like back then.

"We will also display some of the Dudley Castle finds from the archaeological dig. They have been on display previously but only a very small selection. We will be able to display pieces people have never seen before."

The new display space will mean many of the borough's treasures being taken out of storage and put on public view for the first time, from fossils to many fine examples of local glasswork.

The collections will span the ages from pre-history, through Roman and medieval times to the Industrial Revolution.

Councillor Khurshid Ahmed, cabinet member responsible for tourism, said: "It's going to be a new museum, fit for the future."

Alan Lunt, a strategic director fat Dudley Council, added: "The new museum is already shaping up to be a real success story. The building work on the galleries is now complete and we are working on the security and layout before we bring the collections in. I'm sure people will love their new museum."



Councillor Khurshid Ahmed with an artist's impression of how the Archives museum will look

# Donations needed for SVR's scheme to train engineers

RAILWAY enthusiasts are being urged to make donations to a heritage steam line before the deadline for a match-finding offer runs out.

The Severn Valley Railway Charitable Trust set up a £1million endowment Future Fund appeal to raise cash for its work in keeping the 16-mile line, which runs from Bridgnorth to Kidderminster, maintained and on track.

The project has so far raised £450,000 in donations but the time for giving is running out, with the match-funding offer from the Heritage Lottery Fund due to expire in June.

Trust bosses say they are determined to secure the final £50,000 before the offer ends with a final push on fundraising.

Two years ago the trust marked 50 years since a group of young railway enthusiasts met in a Kidderminster pub and decided to reopen the line, which was closed in 1963.

## Volunteers

The railway has been run by volunteers ever since and now they are teaching a new generation the skills to keep the line's historic locomotives in good working order.

The trust, which welcomes 250,000 visitors a year, is pushing an ambitious apprenticeship agenda to become a centre of excellence for heritage rail.

The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has agreed to match, pound-for-pound, all donations up to £500,000, allowing a final total of £1million.

Visit [svrtrust.org.uk](http://svrtrust.org.uk) or call 01562 757940.

# Brave war hero to be honoured at the park

A WAR hero will be honoured at a special ceremony exactly 100 years to the day his actions saw him awarded the Victoria Cross.

Black Country-born Lance Corporal Thomas Bryan bravely headed towards enemy machine gunfire, which had stalled the progress of his battalion.

L/Cpl Bryan survived the First World War and was awarded the military honour by King George V in front of a crowd of 40,000 people at St James' Park football ground in Newcastle.

A memorial plaque paying tribute to the soldier will now be unveiled at Mary Stevens Park in Stourbridge to mark 100 years since his brave actions.

Mayor of Dudley, Councillor Mohammed Hanif, Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Worcestershire Richard Lockett, High Sheriff Dr Keith Bradshaw, Victoria Cross recipient Lance Sergeant Johnson Beharry, and family members of L/Cpl Bryan are due to attend the service on Sunday.

L/Cpl Bryan, who was born in Lye in 1882, was sent to the Western Front with the 25th Battalion, Northumberland Fusiliers, which took place in December 1915.

## Sniper

On the first day of the Battle of Arras, April 9, 1917, the Fusiliers began to advance. But they were held up by a German machine gun, which halted all movement. L/Cpl Bryan set out to find it along with colleague Captain Huntley.

However, the captain was killed by a sniper. L/Cpl Bryan bravely took the decision to go on alone. He was also shot but still continued undeterred.

In an interview with the St George's Gazette in 1917, he said: "Creeping over the top, I went from shell-hole to shell-hole. While making my way along, I was spotted by one of the enemy, who, letting drive, caught me in the right arm.



L/Cpl Thomas Bryan

"Following this bit of hard luck, I decided to try a bit of rapid fire on the place where I thought the machine gun was placed. And, on this being carried out, the gun which had been spitting forth its fire of death barked no more."

The official citation for his Victoria Cross stated: "For most conspicuous bravery during an attack. Although wounded, this Non-commissioned Officer went forward alone, with a view to silencing a machine gun which was inflicting much damage. As this machine gun had been a serious obstacle in the advance to the second objective, the results obtained by Lance Corporal Bryan's gallant action were very far-reaching."

L/Cpl Bryan's memorial will be the second of three to be installed across the borough, joining Second Lieutenant Baxter's memorial also located in Mary Steven's Park. The third memorial, to Private Thomas Barratt of Coseley, will be marked on July 27.

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# Politics debate encourages students to get involved

A POLITICS debate with students from across the borough took place at Dudley Council House.

The Dudley Politics Live event brought together members of Dudley College Students' Union and council representatives to offer an opportunity for the voices of students and other young people to be heard.

Naila Mansouri, student union welfare officer, said: "We had a really good turn out and the event was extremely positive."

"It was the first time that I had attended something like this and it was brilliant to see so many young people engage and take part in the discussion."

"We spoke about mental health, university fees, Brexit and current affairs. It was to enable young people to engage in matters in their area."

"The politicians were really helpful and not scared to get involved. It was extremely positive – I felt that it gave a bright outlook for the future for young people."

"The event is a fantastic opportunity for political parties to highlight their regard for the views of the younger generation – and encourage young people to have a greater sense of determination around their ability to meet with decision makers and be heard."

The audience included youngsters from local schools, Dudley College and unemployed young people.

The panel of politicians included Dudley North MP Ian Austin for Labour, Councillor Dean Perks for UKIP, Andi Mohr (Green), Councillor Patrick Harley (Conservatives) and Ryan Priest (Lib Dem).



Dudley College Students Union president Dan Wood, centre, with panel members, from left, Patrick Harley, Ian Austin, Dean Perks, Andi Mohr and Ryan Priest

# Deal likely on sports ground price hike

A CRICKET club chairman has said he is hopeful of reaching an agreement with council bosses over a proposed rent increase, which he claimed could close the club.

Dudley Council wants raise the rent on the ground shared by Lye's football and cricket clubs by around 500 per cent but is now speaking to both clubs about a possible compromise.

Dave Borley, chairman of Lye Cricket Club, which has played at The Sports Ground since its formation in 1858, said it would struggle to survive if forced to pay the increased amount. He said the club had been asked to present details on how much rent other cricket clubs pay.

He said: "We think we should be paying around a third what we were originally quoted. We are more than happy to go forward with what we think is a fair rateable value but not something that will probably put us out of existence."

The footballers and cricketers have separate lease agreements on the site with Lye Town paying during the football season and cricket club in the summer.

# Criticism on suggestion of civilian police boss

THE region's highest ranking police officer has hit out at suggestions civilians could be allowed to become chief constables in a major shake-up of policing.

A report in a national newspaper said business leaders, army veterans and senior civil servants could be invited to become chief constables, under Government plans.

Forces are currently run by police officers who have risen through the ranks.

The chief constable at West Midlands Police, Dave Thompson, said the radical change would be 'unthinkable'.

He questioned whether outsiders would have enough knowledge and experience for the role.

He also referred to the recent terror attack in Westminster and subsequent police raids in Birmingham and stressed experience of policing was vital.



Chief Constable Dave Thompson

## Shortage

It has been suggested that letting people in with no prior background in policing could boost talent and experience of chief constables.

Chief Constable Thompson said via Twitter: "After the last few days one would think this unthinkable. Anyway, I fancy being an admiral, are we doing that too? Surely the same issue?"

"There is a shortage of senior post applicants and a consultation needs to address this. Overseas chiefs can apply but none appointed."

"Policing is one of the most socially mobile professions. Being talented does not mean went to the right school, university, etc."

According to the report, a consultation on the plans began recently with the Na-

tional Police Chiefs Council and College of Policing.

A change in legislation could allow those from a variety of professions, including the military, teaching and medicine, to apply.

Steve White, chairman of the Police Federation, which represents rank-and-file officers, said he was against the move as chief constables required 'first-hand experience of responding in an operational capacity to incidents they would not encounter in any other walk of life'.

The move would be the latest reform in policing to give outsiders a role in the running of forces.

In 2012, elected police and crime commissioners, mostly with political backgrounds, were introduced to work alongside chief constables.

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HOUSEBUILDER Persimmon Homes has launched a recruitment drive to boost its pool of skilled workers and encourage apprentice bricklayers training at City of Wolverhampton College.

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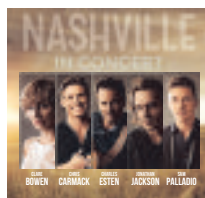
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# Doreen for Mayor? No, I'm far too lazy

**S**he's the first lady of the Black Country. Doreen Tipton, the region's pre-eminent Lazy Cow, is a crisp-eating, award-winning, panto-dazzling, loff-a-minute who'll be on the road in Wolverhampton, Walsall, Telford, Stafford, Brierley Hill and Cannock soon.

Her Grand Night Out is making its final run, her autumn show, Rise Of The Yam-Yam, is selling quicker than scratchings at a Dudley pub and she'll be back in panto at Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre.

Happily, we tracked her down to Tipton – where else – to find out more about her remarkable year. This is how things went...

Doreen, first of all, congratulations on receiving two prestigious awards in the space of a week – Best Newcomer in the Great British Panto Awards in London, and then What's On readers voted you Midlands Entertainment Personality of the Year. How does it feel to be a winner?

"The panto award was a lovely surprise, and I got to meet Christopher Big Ones (Christopher Biggins), who is world-famous in tights. I couldn't remember anything that had happened the previous two months during the show, but I must have done something right.

"And the second award from What's On was even more incredible, because of who I was up against. It's an honour to be thought of in the same breath as the other four finalists. Julie Walters is a personal favourite of mine because I'm a big fan of the Harry Potter films, Bev Knight is a musical legend, and the bloke from Citizen Khan is apparently on the telly in a BBC comedy that they're really proud of, so I'm assuming he must be funny. I hadn't heard of Sir Lenny Henry, but he's obviously one to watch for the future. So yes, I feel blessed to have beaten them hands-down. But the losers have nothing to be ashamed of. They've done well to get this far."

What celebrations did you enjoy following the announcements? A packet of cheese and onion and half a Batham's, or something more exotic: a Desperate Dan pie and a pint of Lumphommer?

"Actually, I never drink on duty. Thankfully I'm never on duty, so it worked out well."

What are you working on at the moment?

"Working is probably too strong a word, but I have got several projects on the go. I'm currently in the middle of doing a short Spring tour with some final Grand Night Out shows for them that missed it first time around. Then I'm having a lie-down. We'll then be touring with a brand new show for autumn: Doreen: Rise of the Yam-Yam which is going to be epic. And along the way I'm filming a new DVD documentary called Doreen's Black Country where I tour around the area and meet some wonderful characters. I'm hoping it will be a funny and very affectionate account of our native land."

When you were growing up in Tipton, did you for a moment imagine you'd become an iconic local hero? Is there a sense of destiny about the rise and rise of the Yam-Yam?

"I'm not sure what iconic means, but if it means something nice, then yes. For too long the Black Country has lived in the shadow of neighbouring Brum, which itself has lived in the shadow of London. Nobody was taking us seriously. I hope that, through my comedy, I can finally get people to stop laughing at us."

From here, we imagine a move into politics. Will you be standing for the local council, as an MP, or seeking election as the President of another country?

"I was recently offered a job as President Trumpet's hod carrier, but at my age I thought better of it. Actually I have considered forming the Yam-Yam Party, and putting some common-sense policies in place, such as making people who break the law pay for their prison food and accommodation."

And what if they can't afford it?

"If they can't afford it, they can sell their house, like old folk have to in order to afford their care

What's sup – Doreen enjoys a pint in The Fountain Inn, Tipton



home. What's the difference? Except one's a criminal and the other isn't. I'm seriously considering becoming a tax-payer, so I can complain about how the Government spends my money. Perhaps if I do go into politics I'll start small. Isn't the West Midlands after a new Mayor?"

Do you fancy the job?

"Oh... is it a job? No then."

The vast riches that your success will have brought will have to be invested wisely, we imagine. Will you be buying property in Tipton, like The Wreck? Or will you invest in 'osses?

"So far I've invested everything into scratchcards, which offer the biggest return on your outlay. I think the scratchcard idea should be rolled out to welfare generally. For example, instead of the Government paying you housing benefit directly, which is boring, you could have a month's rent as one of the scratchcard prizes, or some child benefit, or a week's free jobseekers, and then have lots of smaller prizes of things like multi-packs of crisps, or Pringles, and lucky bags for the kids. It would also be a great way for Government to control welfare spending, so that none of it is wasted on gambling."

With such a busy schedule, we imagine the only way you keep in touch with current affairs is by reading your favourite newspaper: the Star. Why are both so brilliant?

"Because they focus on local issues, for local folk. It's all very well the mainstream media bleating on about Trump and Brexit and foreign

*I hadn't heard of Sir Lenny Henry, but he's obviously one to watch*

countries every day, but what really matters is what happens down your street – or more importantly, down my street. In fact I think the Star should have an edition solely devoted to my street. There'd be some stories for you then, I tell you. Leave me out of it though."

And finally, Doreen, have you got a message for your fans?

"Ta."

Andy Richardson

I Doreen would like to make it clear that when it comes to politics, her views don't necessarily reflect her views.

● For more entertainment news and reviews see The Ticket in your Express & Star every Friday.



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Kasabian – at O2 Academy



## For Crying Out Loud rockers go all intimate

Kasabian are back with an explosive new album brimming with confidence, swagger and huge tunes.

And despite their stadium rockers status, Leicester's finest will be packing out the more intimate O2 Academy on Thursday (13) as part of their low-key, ease-back-in April tour.

Their sixth album, *For Crying Out Loud*, is released on April 28. Written and produced by Kasabian wizard Serge Pizzorno, and recorded at the 'Surgery', his home city studio, the album features 12 tracks that encapsulate everything that makes Kasabian one of this country's top bands.

First single *You're In Love With A Psycho* is a big pop song with an irrepressible hook. Other highlights include the soon-to-be-summer-anthem *Bless This Acid House*, the contagious *Good Fight* and the rock

steady angst of *Ill Ray (the King)*. Lead singer Tom Meighan has never sounded so good, wrapping himself around the addictive hooks.

"I decided to give myself six weeks to write an album like they used to do back in the day and that became really inspiring" Serge recalls.

"I made sure there was no fat on anything, it was going to be classic songs, no self-indulgence.

Following the more electronic direction on 2014's '48:13' Kasabian were keen to make a truly great guitar album. "We wanted to make a very positive album full of hope with guitars to remind people that it's still relevant," says Serge.

Kasabian have four UK no1 albums and have sold more than 5.5 million albums worldwide. They've won a Brit, seven NME awards, four Q Awards and have headlined various festivals.

## It's new Version of Me-lanie C



With her seventh album *Version Of Me* released on her own Red Girl Records label last October, former Spice Girl Melanie C is on tour this month including a gig at Birmingham's O2 Institute on Sunday.

Recorded in LA and London, *Version Of Me* is a richly textured, deeply personal album in which the Liverpoolian pop icon lays bare her life over beats, shimmering synths and strings.

It's described as Melanie as you've always known her but as you've never heard her before.

Working with longtime co-writers Peter Vettese and Adam Argyle,

alongside the young south London production duo Sons Of Sonix Melanie reckons it is the freshest, most contemporary-sounding album of her career.

"I wanted to make an album that I would listen to now," says Melanie.

"I'm not a leftfield artist, I never will be. I write pop songs, but my aim this time was to approach every aspect of them differently, to be more creative with structure and sounds."

The funky first single *Anymore* was released last year and sits alongside other album highlights including the synth-heavy *Dear Life*, the fusion of R&B and house beats on *Room For Love*, the strings-drenched title track and brutal album closer *Blame*.

The 43-year-old singer and actress from Merseyside, Melanie Chisholm first found fame in the 1990 as Mel C, AKA Sporty Spice, one of the five Spice Girls, who cause the biggest British pop phenomenon since Beatlemania.

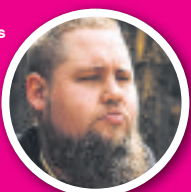
They were at the forefront of 'Girl Power' and 'Cool Britannia's British pop and youth culture seemed on the way to world domination via the pop music scene. Since going solo back in 1999, Melanie C has enjoyed two number 1 singles, six top 10 singles and more than three million album sales.

Melanie C has released a single from the new album. *Hold On* it features Alex Francis, who will also be her support at the Digbeth gig.

## Rag 'n' Bone Man in tour sell-out

Rory Graham, AKA Rag 'n' Bone Man, has sold out his UK tour including his April 24 show at Birmingham's O2 Institute. That's not surprising considering his breakthrough hit *Human* is already being talked of in terms of a classic.

The success of *Human* around the globe follows years of performing. At the age of 15 he started rapping in his hometown of Uckfield and then at 19 started singing at local blues nights, then he joined Brighton hip-hop crew The Rum Committee.



## 70-year celebration for master of farce

Writer, director and master of farce Ray Cooney is celebrating 70 years in showbusiness.

Starting out as a teenaged actor in the 1940s - "I wanted to be Olivier, or even Danny Kaye because I loved comedy," he says - he became a top comedy playwright, much in demand after his *Run For Your Wife* ran in the West End for eight years.

The celebrations of his remarkable career are under way with an updated version of one of his favourite farces *Out Of Order*, which comes on tour to Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre from Monday to Saturday, April 15.

The cast includes Shaun Williamson from *EastEnders* and *Extras*, Sue Holderness (*Marlene in Only Fools & Horses*) and James Holmes (*Miranda*).

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## DIGITAL



Kate is approached by another woman who claims to have been assaulted by Michael Farmer. Combined with the new forensic evidence casting doubt over Tim Iffield, the revelation threatens to undermine AC-12 team's case, to Steve's fury. However, it gives Kate the opportunity to ingratiate herself further with the officers of Operation Trapdoor. Steve challenges Roz's husband to vouch for her whereabouts on the night Tim Iffield disappeared, and sees a new direction for the investigation when he proves evasive.

**12.00** Weather for the Week Ahead.  
**12.05** BBC News.

**12.00 Film:** *The Tempest*. (2010) A Newblonian with magical powers is banished to a remote island along with her daughter. She uses her abilities to dominate the mystical creatures living there and to save a sea captain's wrecked ship. When the survivors come ashore, she learns one of them is her brother, who exiled her, and plans revenge. *Shakespearean fantasy*. Starring Helen Mirren, Felicity Jones, Michael Gambon and Ian McKellen. **1.40** *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*. (1979) Captain Kirk (William Shatner) and his crew face a deadly alien menace. **1.50** *Question Time*. David Dimbleby chairs the debate from Gillingham in Kent, with a panel of politicians and other guests facing topical questions from the audience. **2.00** *Ant and Dec's Panto*. Ant and Dec face her demons and comes to a heart-wrenching conclusion. Meanwhile, Zosia takes action when Isaac reveals his true colours, and Mo and Roksar her professional skills. **2.15** *Ant and Dec's Christmas Special*. (R) **3.40** This is BBC Two. Preview of upcoming programmes from BBC Two.

**12.40** Jackpot**247. 2.30** British Superbike Championship Highlights. **3.20** The Cube. (R) **4.10** ITV Nightscreen. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

**12.05 Film:** *The Guard*. (2011) **1.50**  
Great British Buildings: Restoration of  
the Year. (R) **2.45** *Isis and the Battle for*  
*Iraq*. (R) **3.40** *Unreported World*. (R)

investigate the death of a wine connoisseur. (R) **4.00** Criminals: Caught on Camera. The use of CCTV to tackle violent crime. (R) **4.50** House Doctor. Home improvements from Sutton-in-Ashfield, Nottinghamshire. (R) **5.15** Wildlife SOS. The work of an animal sanctuary. (R) **5.40** Angels of Jarm. Murali cares for an injured bird. (R) **5.50** Roary the Racing Car. (R)

(1954) **1.00** Cutthroat Island (1995) **3.25**  
Avatar (2009) **6.35** Speed 2: Cruise  
Control (1997) **9.00** The Other Woman  
(2014) **11.10** Extract (2010) **12.55** The  
Insider (1999) **4.00** Close

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## FILM CHOICES

**MONDAY**  
**Hummingbird, Channel 5, 11pm**  
 A haunted special forces soldier returns to London from Afghanistan and assumes another man's identity, hoping to make a fresh start. He is drawn into the city's criminal underworld, where his skills prove valuable to the highest bidder, and plots revenge against the gangster who killed his girlfriend. Crime thriller, with Jason Statham and Agata Buzek. (2013)

**TUESDAY**  
**No Strings Attached, BBC1, 11.35pm**  
 Two childhood friends run into each other and end up sleeping together. Neither of them is interested in committing to a relationship, so they agree to keep things purely sexual. But despite their best efforts, they start to fall in love. Romantic comedy, starring Natalie Portman, Ashton Kutcher, Kevin Kline and Cary Elwes. (2011)



Selma, Friday, BBC2, 9pm

**WEDNESDAY**  
**Deadly Daycare, Channel 5, 3.20pm**  
 A divorcee suspects nursery staff of mistreating her young daughter. When the girl's increasingly awkward behaviour arouses suspicion, the mother plants a hidden camera on the premises and discovers why the owner may hold a grudge against her. Thriller, starring Kayla Ewell. (2014)

**THURSDAY**  
**Independence Daysaster, Channel 5, 3.15pm**  
 America's fourth of July celebrations are abruptly interrupted when Earth is invaded by hostile aliens. A maverick scientist and a small-town firefighter join forces to find and activate the only piece of technology in the world that can destroy the extraterrestrial army. Sci-fi thriller, starring Ryan Merriman. (2013)

**FRIDAY**  
**Selma, BBC2, 9pm**  
 In 1965, amidst an atmosphere of racial unrest, civil rights campaigner Dr Martin Luther King Jr plans a peaceful march across Alabama from Selma to Montgomery. His goal is to persuade President Lyndon B Johnson to change the law, allowing black people to register to vote. Fact-based drama, starring David Oyelowo and Carmen Ejogo. (2014)

# Returning series sees Peter back in the driving seat

Sometimes the best ideas are simple ones.

That's certainly the case for sitcoms anyway. Some of the greats have had a very straightforward premise. Stepoe and Son was set mainly in a scrapyard, Basil and Sybil never set foot outside the grounds of Fawley Towers and Father Ted was confined (mostly) to Craggy Island.

Peter Kay's Car Share follows in their footsteps by keeping the 'action' contained inside the car of assistant supermarket manager John Redmond's red Fiat 500L.

However, it didn't take its inspiration from any of the aforementioned programmes, but rather Roger & Val Have Just Got In, an underrated gem of a bittersweet comedy which aired for two series between 2010 and 2012. Alfred Molina and Dawn French played the central characters whose lives were unravelled during the half-hour following their return home from work.

Co-writers Tim Reid and Paul

Coleman also drew from the Baffa-winning sitcom The Smoking Room, which was cancelled after its premise – discussions between co-workers using an area set aside by their company for nicotine addicts – was made redundant by the 2007 smoking ban.

Although Car Share's most famous participant is Peter Kay, it really doesn't belong to him. As mentioned above, it was Reid and Coleman's idea, although Kay and co-star Sian Gibson contribute to the scripts, and it would, admittedly, be difficult to imagine the series without them.

Gibson was largely unknown before the series aired. She first met Kay when they studied together at Salford University; he later cast her in Comedy Lab, That Peter Kay Thing, Phoenix Nights and Britain's Got the Pop Factor... It was she who brought the initial scripts to Kay, but hadn't expected to appear in it until he asked her to get involved – in fact, she hadn't auditioned for any acting roles for a year, and was working in a call

centre instead.

If anything, Gibson is the real star of the show. It's turned her into a star, offering her a chance to demonstrate her not inconsiderable comedic talents – it can only be a matter of time before she has her own vehicle (pardon the pun).

She's certainly thrilled to be back in the passenger seat: "I'm really excited that Car Share is coming back. We had so much fun making the first series and I can't wait to be Kayleigh Kitson again."

Kayleigh is, of course, a promotions rep at the store where John works, and they were thrown together by a scheme encouraging car sharing between co-workers.

Although Kay is used to success, even he was surprised by how well the show was received: "The success of the first series has been completely overwhelming," he says.

The end of the previous run saw the duo grow ever-closer, and there was a hint of romance in the air. Will they be an item when we meet up with them again?



Peter Kay's Car Share, Tuesday, BBC1, 9pm

# BEST OF THE REST

**MONDAY**  
**Warship Channel 4, 8pm**  
 New series. Documentary following the Royal Navy's HMS Ocean on a seven-month active deployment, policing some of the most volatile waters on the planet and co-ordinating the fight against Isis. In this first edition, HMS Ocean leaves Plymouth for the Mediterranean, where the Tailored Air Group of elite armed forces helicopter pilots have just three weeks to learn how to take off and land on a carrier, but engine problems and the approach of a huge storm mean the new recruits and the old hands must pull together to succeed.

**TUESDAY**  
**The Biggest Night in British Theatre – The Olivier Awards ITV, 8pm**  
 Jason Manford is on hand to guide us through the prestigious ceremony honouring the best theatrical shows of the past 12 months. Tim Minchin's Groundhog Day musical was one of the highlights when it debuted at The Old Vic last summer, and there's a chance it will do just as well on Broadway. He'll be flying in to represent the show, while other highlights include Amber Riley performing And I Am Telling You from Dreamgirls, the cast of School Of

Rock The Musical will be wowing the masses, and there's a performance from Matthew Bourne's The Red Shoes.

**WEDNESDAY**  
**Rhod Gilbert's Work Experience BBC2, 10pm**  
 New series. The presenter returns to try out more alternative careers, and begins by taking to the streets of Cwmbran to learn the business of selling houses. Although we know Rhod has the gift of the gab, Gavin, his new mentor, believes happy people sell, placing extra pressure on the grumpy comedian. Will Rhod's unique approach prove to be an asset in the high-octane sales environment and make him employee of the month, or will he have the potential home buyers running scared?

**THURSDAY**  
**The World According to Kids BBC2, 8pm**  
 New series. Children aged between six and 11 from across the UK are equipped with cameras to reveal what they really think of the world, while a number of challenges offer an intimate insight into how

they think. In the opening show, children from a debating club in Bradford, a pony club in Berkshire and a drama class in Gloucester explore their feelings of love and hate. Eight-year-old Abigail discusses her parents' impending wedding. Daniel is looking forward to seeing his father – who has been posted overseas with the Army – and Edmund just loves to hate his little sister.

**FRIDAY**  
**Last Days of Jesus Channel 5, 6.05pm**  
 Back in 2004, gospel accounts of Jesus' crucifixion formed the inspiration for Mel Gibson's film, The Passion of the Christ. The movie sparked enormous controversy for how it portrayed Jesus' death, but piecing together what happened during his final week is a task that has puzzled scholars for

centuries. This documentary asks what could have triggered the crucifixion, and reveals the events that may have sparked Jesus' religious movement, including the death of John the Baptist and an increasing resentment among the people towards Rome. It also examines how power was shifting in the highest reaches of the Roman empire.

**Tony Robinson: Coast to Coast Channel 5, 8pm**  
 The presenter reaches the North Yorkshire Moors and takes to the skies for a bird's-eye view of the journey ahead from the cockpit of a glider from the Sutton Bank gliding club. Back on the ground, he admires the ruins of Rievaulx Abbey and learns the tale of power and greed that eventually brought down the monastery. In the orchards of Ampleforth Abbey, where rare heritage varieties are grown to produce juice and cider, Tony discovers a secret that evokes vivid memories of his childhood.

**Lethal Weapon ITV, 9pm**  
 As Riggs and Murtaugh examine the murder of one of LA's fashion expeditors, they follow a trail of evidence that leads them to a dangerous underground investigation led by the DEA. Clayne Crawford and Damon Wayans star.

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BRAIN GYM No.424

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.

15 12 8 20 4 17 6 4 4

3 26 17 12 23 19 16 5 20 21

21 3 21 4 10 17 9

7 12 25 8 20 18 25 1 10

12 5 2 13 8 20 8

21 20 22 21 5 21 8 8 16

23 25 4 14 21 6 6 16 4

22 20 14 11 13 1 20

21 5 8 5 12 23 17 16 12

4 8 20 12 6 13 23 20

16 20 21 4 23 13 23 11 20 19

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| K  | P  | Z  | I  | F  | G  | A  | W  | D  | R  | H  | J  | Y  |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| Q  | T  | E  | U  | M  | N  | B  | X  | V  | C  | L  | S  | O  |

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

Cryptic Clues:

- Across
- 1. First job involves race at the beginning (8,4)
  - 7. Snake on street gets crow (5)
  - 8. The vehicle will travel as freight (5)
  - 9. Where part of the foot points? (3)
  - 10. Where a prisoner's feelings are registered? (5,4)
  - 11. A knotty problem when medicine is missing (6)
  - 12. Could become silent to give ear (6)
  - 15. Gains fare for travelling on the ocean (9)
  - 17. Vapour given off in making a simple substance (3)
  - 18. No lag lengthwise (5)
  - 19. Animal to take the wheel (5)
  - 21. Give exercise to show practice follows preaching (3,2,7)
- Down
- 1. Filming leading lady with heavenly body? (8,4)
  - 2. Beverage made from waste apples (3)
  - 3. Character of wicked aunt again shown (6)
  - 4. Choose to get in wrong set when supporting strike (9)
  - 5. Be useful and set ball in play (5)
  - 6. Strong, ill disturbed one is no moss gatherer (7,5)
  - 7. About fifty become more flexible and mix well (5)
  - 10. Got a snail to show sentimental feeling (9)
  - 13. Stripes not on an NCO's uniform (5)
  - 14. It's out to take to court for material (6)
  - 16. No ale when unaccompanied (5)
  - 20. A long time in the rain (3)

1 2 3 4 5 6

7 8

9 10 11 12 13

14 15 16 17

18 19 20 21

Quick Clues:

- Across
- 1. Heartbroken (12)
  - 7. Black (5)
  - 8. Collier (5)
  - 9. Trap (3)
  - 10. Indifference (9)
  - 11. Unmask (6)
  - 12. Powerful (6)
  - 15. Withdrew (9)
  - 17. Reverential fear (3)
  - 18. Dense (5)
  - 19. Likeness (5)
  - 21. Reinforced (12)
- Down
- 1. Break up (12)
  - 2. Globe (3)
  - 3. Diction (6)
  - 4. In layers (9)
  - 5. Strained (5)
  - 6. Sinned (12)
  - 7. Establish (3,2)
  - 10. Liberate (9)
  - 13. Declaim (5)
  - 14. Twine (6)
  - 16. Corrupt (5)
  - 20. Tree (3)

Sudoku

4 7 1

1 8 2 9

4 7 6

2 8 3

7 8 1 3 7 5

1 4 9 5

3 6 1

9 8 5 3

Fill in the grid above so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | 6 | 8 | 1 | 7 | 9 | 4 | 5 | 3 |
| 5 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 8 | 9 | 7 | 1 |
| 1 | 7 | 9 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 8 | 2 | 6 |
| 6 | 8 | 1 | 4 | 9 | 5 | 7 | 3 | 2 |
| 3 | 2 | 5 | 7 | 6 | 1 | 8 | 9 | 4 |
| 4 | 9 | 7 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 8 |
| 8 | 5 | 3 | 9 | 1 | 6 | 2 | 4 | 7 |
| 9 | 1 | 2 | 8 | 4 | 7 | 3 | 6 | 5 |
| 7 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 8 | 9 |

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:

CRYPTIC - Across: 4 Advance; 8 Osiers; 9 Avarice; 10 Filter; 11 Detour; 12 Negative; 18 Medicine; 20 Groove; 21 Plates; 22 Intense; 23 Entree; 24 Seconds. Down: 1 Roofing; 2 Vintage; 3 Ardent; 5 Dividend; 6 Aerate; 7 Cactus; 13 Immersed; 14 Distort; 15 Measles; 16 Fringe; 17 Toledo; 19 Island.

QUICK - Across: 4 Dispute; 8 Emblem; 9 Assault; 10 Foeman; 11 Accent; 12 Devotion; 18 Free-will; 20 Debate; 21 Latent; 22 Javelin; 23 Person; 24 Century. Down: 1 Perfidy; 2 Observe; 3 Tenant; 5 Instance; 6 Prance; 7 Talent; 13 Inferior; 14 Disease; 15 Blatant; 16 Decade; 17 Patent; 19 Elated.

Quiz

- 1. What was captured from Spain by admiral George Rooke in 1704?
- 2. In which sport is the annual Stanley Cup contested?
- 3. With which instrument is Keith Jarrett associated?
- 4. Which Bond film features a Louis Armstrong hit song?
- 5. What do the letters UHT stand for?
- 6. Of which country is Karachi the largest city?
- 7. In Greek mythology, who tried to bring Eurydice back from the dead?
- 8. Niacin belongs to which group of vitamins?
- 9. Which dog was first bred as the 'imperial lion dog'?
- 10. Which English garden designer coined the term 'landscape gardening'?

Last week's solutions:

- Quiz: 1 Hendrik Verwoerd; 2 Trampolining; 3 Carson City; 4 A deer; 5 George Martin; 6 Literature; 7 Lincolnshire; 8 Thomas Edison; 9 The RAC Rally; 10 Vaclav Havel.
- Niner: NOURISHED

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

3755478  
48925  
7817371645

gives a bad person,  
gives a good person,  
gives a person.

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

COMMERCIAL FEATURE

Discover what holiday parks have to offer at open event

A trio of parks in the heart of England are opening their gates over the Easter Bank Holiday weekend to welcome visitors who want to explore the idea of holiday home ownership.

Award-winning 'Discover Parks', is hosting a showcase weekend at each of their three sites, which all nestle beneath the rolling hills on the Herefordshire/Welsh Marches border.

Pearl Lake, the largest of the trio, is a luxury country park set around a breath-taking 15-acre glacier lake, whilst Arrow Bank is a small select park in the historical black and white village of Eardisland.

Diversity

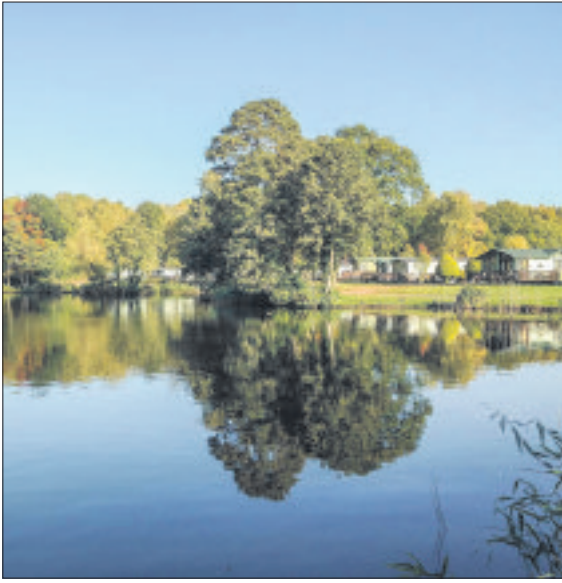
Rockbridge Park sits in the dramatic landscape just outside the Welsh border town of Presteigne and as well as having luxury holiday homes, offers residential park homes and lodges.

Priding themselves on the variety and diversity that they offer, owners Glenn and Hannah Jones say what sets them apart from their competitors is that they can usually match most holiday home owners' needs.

"Some people want more facilities for families, whilst others want a smaller, more intimate country retreat. Within our three parks we are able to deliver on all counts!

"As well as a nine hole golf course, top class bowling green, 20 acres of woodland to wander in, two rivers to fish, we have recently introduced a children's zip wire, a BMX track and a new wildlife station."

This is the first open weekend of the



Pearl Lake is a luxury country park set around a 15-acre glacier lake

season and a chance for customers from across the Midlands region to view the wide range of pre-owned holiday homes, plus the latest 2017 model holiday homes and lodges on display. Each park will be hosting events over the weekend and as they're all within 15 minutes drive of each other visitors will be able to familiarise themselves with the surrounding area.

Call in for full details or visit the website [www.discoverparks.co.uk](http://www.discoverparks.co.uk)

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- Monday Treasure Hunt

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Welsh Borders • LD8 2NF  
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# Note that new Tenerife cool vibe

TENERIFE'S sleepy landscape is changing. If you head to the island, you may need to pack your party heels to investigate the island's cool new vibe. . .

Eyeing up Elton John's multi-coloured feathery showman costume and a skimpy gold Britney Spears number, I wonder if I've underdressed for dinner.

These 100-plus pieces of memorabilia are all part of the furniture at Hard Rock Hotel Tenerife, where music legends are brought to life at every turn. Tracy Chapman lyrics line the wall, countless iconic instruments dangle from ceilings, and even the disabled toilet sign has been tweaked to carry a guitar and 'rock on' hand symbol.

HRH Tenerife opened on the sunny southern coast near Adeje late last year, and true to its name, it's rocking the sleepy side of Tenerife as we know it. Think live gigs and DJ sessions with a set list to rival Ibiza, played out on a 5,000-capacity stage boasting a view of the Atlantic.

Music makers can upgrade their DIY jam sessions in the Rock Royalty penthouse suites, or dial in room service for a pop-up studio Fender electric guitar and amp (headphones provided so you don't wake the neighbours).

## OBSSESSED

Popstar Shakira's T-shirt is displayed right outside my hotel room and I become obsessed with a Beatles photography exhibit – a collection of 11 super-cool vacation snaps from 1963 taken in Tenerife before the band rocketed to fame. A month later, Please Please Me went to number one for 30 weeks.

We experience the hotel's first ever monthly Children Of The 80s open-air night where we dance (jacket-free in December) to live performances of Black Box's Ride

Time to relax at the lovely pool bar at Hard Rock



Dancing along at opening night of Children of the 80s



on Time and C+C Music Factory's Gonna Make You Sweat in a sea of neon leotards and OTT Eighties wigs. It doesn't feel anything like the Tenerife my mum told me about. . .

Tenerife's southern coast revamp has seen a boost to its nightlife in recent years, with hotspots like the lively Monkey Beach Club and the chic Papagayo Beach Club, both at Troya Beach where you can watch the Canarian sunset with cocktails – and then party on after-dark.

But it isn't all dancing 'til the small hours in Tenerife. On our visit, we blow away the morning-after hangover

blues with a visit to the breathtaking Teide National Park, where we explore the stark volcanic landscape that attracts five million visitors per year. So good in fact, it's been the backdrop for films like Clash of the Titans and Fast & Furious 6.

My head for heights is challenged when we climb 3,718 metres above sea level in a cable car practically to the summit of Mount Teide, Spain's highest peak, where Tenerife's temperatures suddenly drop, along with the air pressure. The trade-off is the breathtaking, Instagram-worthy views. The scene back at HRH

Tenerife isn't all monochrome mosaic pools with underwater music (though that is pretty epic). Beach fans will find both volcanic black sand and soft white sand in the secluded surrounding bays, if you ever want a break from the hotel's playlist.

Tenerife's newest uber-hotel (two tower blocks bathed in flickering lights at night) is different to its global sister hotels, insists Matt Watts, director of music and marketing for Hard Rock International: "It's not 'in your face' like our Vegas hotel. The vibe is more feel-good and subdued."

LISA HAYNES



**1980s**  
**8 April - 14 May**



Artist Lee Bradley gives his own unique take on those lovable cartoon characters from the 1980s. **Cost: Museum entry applies**

**8, 12, 17, 22 & 30 April, Meet the artist, 11am – 4pm**

Meet artist Lee Bradley in the exhibition where he will talk about his work & sketch.

**25 April, 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30 May, Draw your own Cartoons for Adults, 7pm - 9pm**

Cost: £30 for 6 weeks (Limited places available, please book in advance)

**27 April, 4, 11, 18, 25 May & 1 June**

**Draw your own Cartoons for Young People (12 – 18), 6.30pm – 8.30pm**

Cost: £30 for 6 weeks (Limited places available, please book in advance)

**Sunday 7 May, 11am - 4pm**

**Celebration Event Day - Relive an 80s childhood**

Retro Gaming with the Retro Computer Museum

80s soundtrack provided by Vintage Trax

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Retro Cartoons Exhibition & Lee Bradley in the gallery

80s cartoons costume competition

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01527 62509 [www.forgemill.org.uk](http://www.forgemill.org.uk)



## COMMERCIAL FEATURE

# Forge Mill Needle Museum

Forge Mill Needle Museum in Redditch tells the fascinating story of how the humble needle was made and visitors are able to experience the largely unchanged atmosphere of a Victorian scouring mill with machinery and water wheel operational on Tuesday afternoons and weekends.

A short walk from the mill are the medieval ruins of Bordesley Abbey and many of the archaeological finds can be seen in the Visitor Centre located in the museum grounds. The picturesque grounds also include a gift shop, extensive children's play area and sand pit as well as access to historic meadows for walks.

The site runs an exciting events and temporary exhibitions programme and this Easter's exhibition is 'Retro Kids Cartoons: 1980s'. The museum has worked with local artist Lee Bradley on this nostalgic exhibition which



has also been supported by the Arts Council. Lee gives his own unique take on those lovable cartoon characters from the 80s. Cartoons such as He-Man, Thundercats, Dungeons and Dragons and Gummi Bears all feature in the exhibition alongside many more. As well as having fun remembering cartoons, visitors will be able to relive an 80s childhood by playing arcade games such as

Pac Man and retro computer games. Artist Lee Bradley will be in the gallery to talk to visitors about his work, demonstrate techniques and sketch on 8, 12, 17, 22 and 30 April. The museum is open from 11am – 4.30pm on week days and 11am – 4.00pm at weekends. Please see the website, [www.forgemill.org.uk](http://www.forgemill.org.uk) for more details on this exhibition and what is going on for the rest of the year.





# NewBuilds

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## Modern first-floor flat in established location

UPPER GORNAL

£65,000

This one-bedroomed flat for sale in Jockey Fields, Upper Gornal, Dudley, is a modern first-floor property in an established location.

Also having a study/nursery room, it is for sale through Wakeman at £65,000.

Its accommodation comprises an entrance hall, a landing, a living room, a kitchen, bedroom, a study/nursery room, and communal grounds. The property can be found midway between Sedgley and Dudley, being convenient for a wide range of amenities.

Contact Wakeman on 01384 459999.



## Deceptively spacious home on the market

ROWLEY REGIS

£275,000

<<<

Delightfully presented, this deceptively spacious home in Britannia Gardens, Rowley Regis lies at the head of a cul-de-sac.

It is for sale through Taylors at £275,000. Featuring gas central heating and oak-style double glazed windows, its accommodation briefly comprises an entrance vestibule, a good size dining room, a study/office, a cloakroom with a WC, an excellent sized lounge, a large double glazed conservatory, a most attractive re-fitted kitchen, a fitted utility, a four decent bedrooms, an en suite shower room, a very attractive house bathroom, driveway parking and attractive rear garden.

Contact Taylors on 01902 880888 or visit [www.taylors-estateagents.co.uk](http://www.taylors-estateagents.co.uk)



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\*Available on selected plots.







# Improved property on extremely popular estate

DUDLEY  
£324,950 <<<

Enviously situated on an imposing corner plot, this lovingly improved and extended property in Cowley Drive lies on the extremely popular Milking Bank development in Dudley.

New to the property market, the home is for sale through Taylors at £324,950.

This modern detached property has so much to offer and is an ideal family home, said a spokesman for the selling agent.

Having gas central heating and double glazing, the accommodation of this five-bedroom house also benefits from an entrance hall, a well-appointed transverse living room, a sitting/family room, a dining room, a kitchen-diner, a good-sized utility room, a ground floor shower room, a master bedroom with an en-suite, a walk-in wardrobe to second bedroom and a fitted family bathroom.

Call 01902 880888.



# Well-presented three-bed semi with no chain

WOODSETTON  
£139,950

Ready to move straight in to, this well presented and extended traditional three-bedroom semi-detached property in Flavell Street, Woodsetton, Dudley, is for sale through Wakeman at £139,950 with no chain.

Its accommodation briefly comprises a storm porch, entrance hall, cloakroom/WC, lounge, living room, breakfast area, kitchen, landing, bathroom, gardens, parking and a garage.

In more detail this home occupies a level plot in a popular and well established residential area, between Sedgley and Dudley. It is well placed for a wide range of amenities and is within easy commuting distance of most major West Midland commercial centres.

For further information call 01384 459999.



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5



3 Sites for more details visit [www.cameronhomes.co.uk](http://www.cameronhomes.co.uk)

4



4 Sites for more details visit [www.lovellhomes.co.uk](http://www.lovellhomes.co.uk)

2

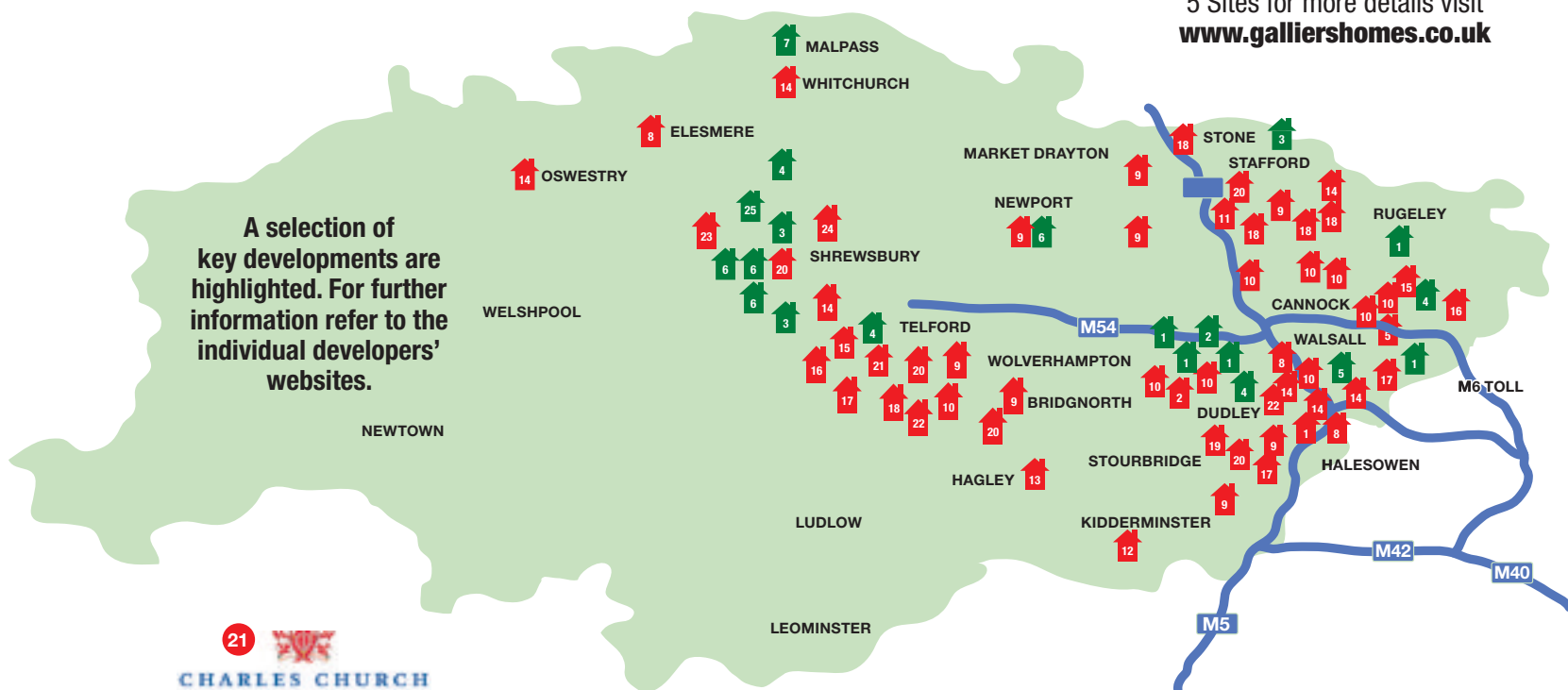


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5 Sites for more details visit [www.galliershomes.co.uk](http://www.galliershomes.co.uk)



21



12



23



13



8



10



17



Lioncourt Homes

7



24



20



16



18



15



19



22



9



14





# Startin celebrates arrival of new Civic

Commercial feature

Startin Honda of Worcester and Stourbridge is delighted to announce the general launch of the all-new 2017 Honda Civic.

As part of showcasing the all-new Honda Civic, Startin Honda will have a selection of the tenth generation models, including the SE, the Sport and Premiere, so that potential customers can view their dream car.

Customers will be able to choose from either a 1.0 or 1.5 turbo charged petrol engine with either a manual or automatic transmission.

Excellent design

Built in Britain at the factory in Swindon and exported world-wide, this latest Honda Civic is the tenth generation models, including the SE, the Sport and Premiere, so that potential customers can view their dream car.

The result is that the Honda Civic is distinctive thanks to its stand-out design, comes with greater refinement than ever before, and is exciting to drive due to the new engines.

With such a variety of choice, Startin Honda is confident it has a Honda Civic to suit even the most discerning of buyers.

Timothy Freeman, dealer principal at Startin Honda, said: "The Honda Civic has always been a strong seller for us but the latest generation model has really moved the game on substantially. With its sporty driving, class-leading space and advanced safety, the all-new Honda Civic is a compelling buy. It



The Civic has always been a popular seller for Startin



Out and about with the new Honda Civics

even comes with the very latest in advanced connectivity."

Freeman continued: "There is one aspect that all potential customers of the new Civic will welcome – the extremely competitive deals we have on offer. That's why I'm

confident we can help all customers to choose the version that's right for them."

The new Honda Civic arrives in Startin Honda's showroom having already claimed a prestigious award. The high-performance version of the Civic, the Type R, took the



The new Honda Civics on their way to the showroom

highly acclaimed What Car? Award for the most anticipated car of 2017. This is an award voted for by the thousands of readers of What Car? magazine and marks out the hot hatch Civic as the most eagerly anticipated car of the year.

Customers interested in viewing and test driving the all-new Honda Civic are invited to contact and visit Startin Honda St Johns Worcester or Startin Honda Lye Town Stourbridge.

Call Startin Honda on 01384 422488.

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|--------------------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|------------------|------------------|---|------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 2017 Civic 129PS i-VTEC SR Man | £20,340.00 | £4,831.32 | 27%       | £750.00          | £14,758.68       | £209.00                                     | £9,365.85                    | £22,471.17           | 5.9%               | £10.00                 | 10,000                    | 7p                    | 5.68%                  |



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Fuel consumption figures for the Civic SR 1.0 i-VTEC Turbo Manual mpg (l/100km): Urban 44.1mpg (6.4l/100km), Extra Urban 64.2mpg (4.4l/100km), Combined 55.4mpg (5.1l/100km). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions: 117g/km. Fuel consumption figures sourced from official EU-regulated laboratory test results, are provided for comparison purposes and may not reflect real-life driving experience.

Model Shown: Civic SR 1.0 i-VTEC Turbo Manual in Rallye Red at £20,340 On The Road (OTR). Terms and Conditions: New retail Civic i-VTEC Turbo petrol ordered from 01 April 2017 to 30 June 2017 and registered by 30 June 2017. Subject to model and colour availability. Offers applicable at participating dealers and are at the promoter's absolute discretion. Not to be used along with any other offers currently available. \*Honda deposit contribution: £750 Honda deposit contribution on new Civic i-VTEC Turbo petrol models purchased through Honda Aspirations. 5.9% APR representative Honda Aspirations (PCP): Maximum customer deposit 30%. You do not have to pay the Final Payment if you return the car at the end of the agreement and you have paid all other amounts due, the vehicle is in good condition and has been serviced in accordance with the Honda service book and the maximum annual mileage has not been exceeded. Excess mileage charge includes VAT at current rate. Indemnities may be required in certain circumstances. Finance is only available to persons aged 18 or over, subject to status. All figures are correct at time of publication but may be subject to change. Honda Franchise Dealers are credit brokers, not lenders. Credit provided by Honda Finance Europe Plc, Cain Road, Bracknell, Berkshire RG12 1HL. Honda Financial Services is a trading name of Honda Finance Europe Plc. Cain Road, Bracknell, Berkshire RG12 1HL, a company registered at Companies House No 03289418. Honda Finance Europe plc is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority, Financial Services Register number 312541. 5 Years £599 Servicing: Please visit <http://www.honda.co.uk/cars/offers.html>



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# MOTERING SECTION

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## MOTERING

# All-new Insignia range

By James Parker

Vauxhall's all-new Insignia is on sale now priced from £17,115 on-the-road.

Available as a five-door Grand Sport hatch and Sports Tourer estate, with a rugged Country Tourer estate coming soon, the new range starts at nearly £1,500 less than the entry price into the outgoing line-up.

Range highlights include the all-new 1.5-litre Turbo petrol model priced from £17,115 on-the-road. For Sports Tourer customers, prices start from £18,615 on-the-road for the entry-level estate model. T

he range-topping 2.0-litre (260PS) 4X4 petrol, another all-new powertrain, is available in Elite Nav trim from £28,455 on-the-road.

One of the highlights of the diesel offering is the 1.6-litre (110PS) Turbo D ecoTEC model (prices start at £18,485 on-the-road) that achieves CO2 emissions of 105g/km.

The range includes Design, Design Nav, SRI, SRI Nav, SRI VX-Line Nav, Tech Line Nav and Elite Nav versions.

The new Insignia range offers big savings over key competitors for company car drivers. Thanks to Vauxhall's optimised P11D pricing, the Insignia Grand Sport Design Nav 1.6-litre Turbo D (110PS) ecoTEC saves a company car driver up to £1,983 in benefit-in-kind tax over a four-year/80,000-mile period against a Volkswagen Passat SE Business 1.6-litre TDI (120PS),



For Sports Tourer customers, prices start from £18,615, and for the hatch from £17,115

and up to £1,358 over a Skoda Superb CR SE Technology 1.6TDI 120PS. For fleet-decision makers, the Insignia Grand Sport Design Nav 1.6-litre Turbo D (110PS) ecoTEC provides a whole life cost saving of up to £5,691 versus a Volkswagen Passat SE Business 1.6-litre TDI (120PS), and up to £4,350 over a Ford Mondeo Zetec [Nav] 1.5 TDCi ECOnetic (120PS).

Driver and passenger safety are crucial for both company car drivers and fleet managers alike, which is why the new Insignia range gets the Front Camera System and Vauxhall OnStar, as standard.

The Front Camera System incorporates features such as lane keep assist, following distance

indicator, forward collision alert, low speed collision mitigation braking and active emergency braking. Vauxhall OnStar gives occupants access to a host of innovative services including automatic crash response; as well as 4G Wi-Fi for up to seven devices, stolen vehicle assistance, vehicle diagnostics, destination download and smartphone functionality.

Each trim level features a high level of standard spec:

### Design:

Standard features include, exterior convenience/styling, 17-inch bi-colour structure wheels, automatic lighting control, electrically operated front/rear windows, keyless entry and start,

electrically-adjustable/heated door mirrors, interior convenience/styling, air conditioning and cruise control with speed limiter.

### Infotainment:

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Models shown: MG GS Exclusive with metallic paint in Spiced Orange at £20,090 and MG3 3Style+ in Newton Black with White Trophy Stripe graphics pack and white wing mirror caps at £12,045.40. †On the road (OTR) price of £8,695 applies to the MG3 3Time with no optional extras and £15,095 applies to the MG GS Explore with no optional extras. OTR prices include VAT where applicable, vehicle first registration fee, delivery, number plates and 12 months' Vehicle Excise Duty. From prices exclude optional metallic paint, accessories and graphics packs. Fuel consumption values shown are based on official EU test figures and are to be used as a guide for comparative purposes and may not be representative of actual driving results. Offer terms and conditions apply.

\*0% APR. Conditional sale. 0% APR available on all MG3 and MG GS models until 30.06.2017. A minimum deposit of 20% of the cash OTR price applies on all MG3 models and 30% of the cash OTR price applies on all MG GS models. Finance by MG Financial Services, a trading style of GMAC UK plc, PO Box 6666, Cardiff CF15 7YT, subject to status, availability and terms and conditions. Applicants must be aged 18 or over at participating dealers. See your local dealer or visit [mg.co.uk/offers](http://mg.co.uk/offers) for details.

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**TWO SEATER SETTES**, 2, with arm covers, include poufette, as new, pale green and apricot fabric. £70. 01384 240689 or 07955 614842.

### in your garden

**PETROL CHAINSAW**, spare chain, very good condition. £65. Telephone 01384 240689 or 07955 614842.

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**READERS ARE ADVISED** to carefully consider all of their options before agreeing to the sale of any of their items.

### kitchens & bathrooms



**KITCHEN UNITS**  
Ivory kitchen, brown laminate worktops, with stainless steel sink, double electric oven, gas hob, see photo. Excellent condition. Can be seen fitted. Buyer collects. £325 ono. 01562 510165.

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SOURCE: The Newspaper Society - Consumer Centred 2016



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It is an offence under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 to carry out gas work in the UK without being on the Gas Safe Register.

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Reliable & Friendly, Professional Female Painters & Decorators  
Attention to detail, competitive prices.  
For the Perfect Finish with minimum hassle.  
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**plastering**

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SINGLE ITEMS TO FULL LOADS.  
LOCAL OR DISTANCE. FULLY INSURED.  
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We move anything. Professional service, 45 years' experience, DFS approved and we take the stress away.  
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CALL DEAN NOW: For all your Removal needs. 07429 453209 / 01902 830870 / 01384 940260.

CALL IAN. Man with a large van. No job too small, no distance too far. 07973 628534, 01902 891535.

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NO JOB TOO SMALL  
H. Robinson & Son  
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MG ROOFING Flat roofs, tiling, roof repairs, fascias and gutters. Call 01902 238989 / 07580 465449.

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**4 Pets & Animals**

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GAZING AND STABLE £20pw Westcroft area. 07956 824381.

**pets corner**

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Please be aware that when purchasing a puppy there are some simple guidelines you can follow to ensure that you are not purchasing from a Puppy Farmer:  
1. Try to ensure you visit the puppy whilst it is still with its Mother.  
2. Do not arrange to collect a puppy from any other location than that of the breeder.  
3. Ensure that you are given any KC documentation, if pedigree. Whilst Midland News Association publications take great care to avoid publication of advertisements from Puppy Farmers we cannot accept any liability should readers purchase from this kind of establishment.

**AMERICAN COCKER** Spaniel, 1 dog, very loving and cute, ready to go now, vaccinated, microchipped, wormed. Mom and Dad can be seen. \$450. 07974 749088.

**BORDER COLLIE**, dog, 5 months old, genuine reason for sale, £200. Telephone 07731 563042.

**ROSEDENE RESCUE CENTRE**  
1, Radley Road, Rushall, Walsall, WS4 1LN.  
01922 627013.  
Open Monday to Saturday 11am - 5pm  
Sundays - Bank Holidays 11am - 4pm.  
Takes in relinquished dogs from owners, all areas (if they are vet checked/up to date with jabs).  
Donations of dog food, toys, bedding and vet bills always appreciated.

**BUY LOCAL SELL LOCAL**  
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**5 Business & Farming**

**business opportunities**

READERS are recommended to take appropriate professional advice before entering into any obligations.

**commercial premises sale / let**

DUDLEY SHOP Gornal Wood High St, 650 sqft. Currently used as Tanning Salon, Modern interior, £500 per month 07852 225618

**6 Property**

**accommodation to let**

**NOTICE TO READERS**  
It is an offence under the Accommodation Agencies Act 1953, for an Agency to charge a fee simply for the registration of your requirements and/or supplying particulars of premises to let.

**NOTICE TO READERS**  
Readers are advised to seek independent legal advice before entering into any financial commitments/contracts.

**NETHERTON AREA** 2-bed house, DSS welcome, 30 plus, no pets, deposit required. 07780 704435.  
**ONE BED** flat CH, very private, Parkfields area, 35sqw. DSS considered. Deposit required. 07968 326578, 07487 647047.

**ONE BEDROOM** flat, first floor, Sealeys Ave, Long Knowle, Dss accepted. 0121 2969866.

**flats for sale**

**MCCARTH & STONE COMPLEX**

**RETIREMENT FLAT FOR SALE**  
Exmouth, Devon.  
One bed.  
Could be ideal Holiday home.  
Newly refurbished kitchen and bathroom.

Walking distance to sea front.  
Warden controlled and secure.  
Medical alarm alarms.  
Communal lounge.

Laundry facility, lift, parking, £65,000  
01746 218249.

**mobile homes**

**HIGHLEY SHROPSHIRE**  
Stately 40 x 20ft Twin, hall, living room, dining room, kitchen, utility, two double bedrooms one en-suite, fitted wardrobes, bathroom, extras.gch, small garden, shed, residential park in peaceful location near village, no chain.  
£123,990.  
01746 961199 or 07848 690406.

**overseas property**

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**WE PAY 100% of purchase price EVERY TIME!**  
**For Your House CASH**  
You agree the price, we buy the house.  
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**01384 500 500** 30 yrs  
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01902 628047 Lines open 24 hours a day 7 days a week Terms applicable

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We are looking for houses in your area. We will take any type of property in any condition. Call us first - highest prices paid.  
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"I am really pleased with the response I get from my Classified Advertising!"  
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Brought to you by Express & Star

**CHOOSE CLASSIFIED**  
"We have been advertising in the Express & Star and Chronicles for over 20 years and consider it a key part of our business with the regular flow of calls, which our advertising generates."  
Black Country Homes  
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**MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY JOBSDAY**  
**jobs.expressandstar.com**  
REAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOU

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**national homeowners helpline.co.uk**  
in a mess? talk in confidence we can help  
**WE PAY MORE ANY AREA ANY CONDITION**  
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24-7 **0121 308 7786**

**STOP WE PAY MORE!**  
100% every time\* Free Solicitors No Fees\* Any Property\* Any Condition\*  
**01902 628 047**  
\* subject to terms

**7 Jobs**  
part time - general

**NEWSBOYS / GIRLS**  
wanted for delivering promotional copies of Express & Star in  
**NEWS DELIVERERS**  
needed in the Norton area of Stourbridge  
Please contact Customer Services on 0800 174064.



## employment wanted

BRICKWORK REQUIRED by experienced bricklayer. Contact 07341 021774.

## 8 Motoring

### cars over £1500

HAVE YOU CHECKED your advertisement today? We would respectfully remind advertisers that it is their responsibility to inform the publishers of any mistakes or inaccuracies on the first day of publication.



**FORD MONDEO EDGE**  
07 Reg Low mileage 68,000 miles

MOT to Dec 2017  
Genuine reason for sale  
Hence £1,600 for a quick sale  
Telephone Paul  
07766 327017  
Z293

## IDEAL FIRST CAR

**FORD FIESTA ZETEC**

Climate, 5dr, 08, ocean blue, MoT December, 49,000 miles, very good condition.

£2,850

01902 847277

or

07548 511612.

## DIESEL

**FORD SMAX 2.0TDCI TITANIUM**

150PS, 2007, 12 months MoT, 135k, central locking, CD player, air con, abs, pas, alloy wheels, good condition.

£3,250 ono.

Telephone 07973 152480.

## PRESTIGE

**MERCEDES SL350 AUTOMATIC CONVERTIBLE**

54 reg, 74,000 miles, FSH, Obsidian Black, with cream leather, keyless go, power hood, panoramic glass roof, anti roll bar wind deflector, alloys, sat nav, Xenon lights, 2 keys. Absolutely pristine.

£9,999.

07836 204450

or

07545 601552.

## SUPER BARGAIN

**SEAT IBIZA 1.4SE**

10 reg., good condition, low mileage 43,000,

FSH, 12 months MoT.

£4,300 ono

07916 313148.



**VAUXHALL CORSA 1.4 DESIGN**

Red, automatic, 43,000 miles, 07 plate, Air con, electric windows, 3-dr, alloys, new tyres, full MoT.

£2,500.

01902 791415.



**VOLKSWAGEN POLO**

57 plate, 113,000 miles, abs, electric windows, air bag, a/c, MoT, central locking, pas, new cambelt, full service, new exhaust, good condition.

£1,595 ono.

07463 621718.

## cars under £1500

ADVERTISERS ARE REMINDED that the Business Advertisements (Disclosure) Order of 1977 requires that advertisements must clearly differentiate between Private and Trade.

Very good condition.

Bargain £370 ono.

07954 091911.



**FIAT PUNTO**

2005, 91,000 miles, gold, electric mirrors, MoT, service history. Very clean condition.

£795 ono.

01902 897680.



**FORD KA,**

55 plate, long MoT, silver lady owner, excellent condition, drives superb, first to see will buy,

£595 ono

07791 113800.

## IDEAL FIRST CAR

**FORD KA**

Blue, 3 door hatchback, 2003, 1.3cc, 60mpg, MoT July 2017, pas.

Very economical.

Very reliable, driven daily.

Very good condition.

Bargain £370 ono.

07954 091911.

## 1ST TO SEE WILL BUY

**HYUNDAI GETZ**

1.1 GSi 5dr

2006 registered 55 plate

In red with Service history

1 former lady keeper

12 months MoT

Fantastic condition.

Only £995.

07399 675758.

## IDEAL FIRST CAR

**NISSAN MICRA 1.0 SE**

48,500 miles.

MoT till September 2017,

silver, average condition.

£650.

07968 312921

PEUGEOT INDEPENDENCE 2000, 48,000 Miles, silver, long MoT, alloy wheels, new tyres and exhaust 2016 £300 ono 01902 685223



**RENAULT GRAND SCENIC**

2004, 63,000 miles, blue, electric windows, air bag, air con, MoT, central locking, pas, diesel, sunroof, alloys, stereo, CD.

£1,100 ono.

07412 004439.

## classic cars

WANTED, CLASSIC Car. Private cash buyer. Any condition, anything considered. 01630 652993 or 07773 462797.

## commercial vehicles

BARGAIN VANS small - large £995-£3995 inc vat 12mth MoT & service 01902 451877 / 07944 640999

## motorbikes

## MUST BE SEEN

**SUZUKI GN125**

One owner, 7,000 miles, red and chrome, very good condition,

£1,100 ono.

Can deliver.

07850 233858.

## scrap vehicles

OUR ADVERTISERS are reminded that it is an offence under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 to buy scrap cars/metal for cash.

A BETTER PRICE for scrap or damaged cars and commercials. Spares for sale. NINE LOCKS VEHICLE DISMANTLERS LTD

Brierley Hill 01384 76566 or 70553. Evenings 75397. DY5 3JZ.

## vehicles wanted

alan reed cars

Used cars wanted for cash

Top prices paid, HP settled.

Buyer could call

01562 711083 /

07831 245313

CROWN MOTORS guarantee best price for your unwanted cars/vans. 07903 549849, buyer will call.

## spares & accessories

accessories & services

TRAILER 4ft x 3ft with jockey wheel, Novol Portafit, good condition £130 ono. 07805 942308.

## clutches / brakes / gearboxes

A CLUTCH CHANGE MOBILE For Example: Citroen C1, C2, C3 Hyundai 110, Toyota Yaris Clio & Micras Ring for quotes on others! 30 yrs experience ALL AREAS COVERED Call Bob 01384 251328 07972 169554 anytime

## 9 Local Information

## public & legal notices

ELSI GRIFFITHS PARKES (Deceased)

Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 any persons having a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the aforementioned deceased, late of The Cedars Christian Residential Home 20-22 Redlake Road Pedmore West Midlands, who died on 06/01/2017, are required to send particulars thereof in writing to the undersigned Solicitors on or before 16/06/2017, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to claims and interests of which they have had notice.

BUSS MURTON LAW LLP 31 High Street Cranbrook Kent TN17 3EE T498324

## STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

NOTICE OF MAKING AN ORDER PUBLIC PATH DIVERSION AND DEFINITIVE MAP & STATEMENT MODIFICATION ORDER

HIGHWAYS ACT 1980 WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981

STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL (PUBLIC FOOTPATH NO 7 (PART), 8 AND 9 (PART) SWINDON PARISH)

PUBLIC PATH DIVERSION AND DEFINITIVE MAP & STATEMENT MODIFICATION ORDER 2017

The above Order, made on 21 February 2017 under Section 119 of the Highways Act 1980 and Section 53A(2) of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 will divert that length of Public Footpath No. 7 Swindon Parish running from grid reference 387049 289946 in a generally east south-easterly direction for approximately 194 metres to grid reference 387231 289874; to a new line running from grid reference 387049 289946 and heading in a generally southerly direction for approximately 16 metres before turning to head in a generally east south-easterly direction for approximately 136 metres to grid reference 387185 289904 before heading in a generally north easterly direction for approximately 148 metres to its junction with the new route of Public Footpath No. 9 Swindon at grid reference 387313 289981. Also, that length of Public Footpath No. 8 Swindon Parish running from its junction with Public Footpath No. 9 Swindon at grid reference 387340 289963 in a generally southerly direction for approximately 25 metres to grid reference 387343 289940; to a new line running from its new junction with Public Footpath No. 9 Swindon at grid reference 387344 289977 in a generally south south-westerly direction for approximately 43 metres before heading in a generally south south-easterly direction for approximately 13 metres to grid reference 387337 289924. Also, that length of Public Footpath No. 9 Swindon Parish running from grid reference 387140 289966 in a generally easterly direction for approximately 252 metres to grid reference 387394 289970; to a new line running from grid reference 387140 289966 in a generally east north-easterly direction for approximately 86 metres to grid reference 387221 290002 before heading in a generally east south-easterly direction for approximately 178 metres to grid reference 387394 289970 as shown on the Order map and modify the Definitive Map & Statement for the District of South Staffordshire accordingly.

A copy of the Order and Order map has been placed and may be seen free of charge at South Staffordshire Council Offices, Wolverhampton Road, Codsall, Staffordshire, WV8 1PX during normal opening hours and at the offices of Staffordshire County Council, Corporate Reception, 1 Staffordshire Place, Stafford ST16 2DH from 8.30 am to 5.00 pm between Monday and Friday. Copies of the Orders and maps may be bought there at the price of 10p per A4 page; £2 per map.

Any representations about or objections to any of the Orders may be sent in writing to the Director of Strategy, Governance & Change, Staffordshire County Council, 2 Staffordshire Place, Stafford ST16 2DH not later than 5.00 pm on 5 May 2017. Please state the grounds on which they are made.

If no such representations or objections are duly made, or if any so made are withdrawn, the Staffordshire County Council may confirm the Order as an unopposed Order. If any Order is sent to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food & Rural Affairs for confirmation, any representations and objections which have not been withdrawn will be sent with the Order.

John Tradewell, Director of Strategy, Governance & Change, 2 Staffordshire Place, Stafford ST16 2DH

Dated: 7 April 2017

## 10 Personals

## personal

ATTRACTIVE lonely Female seeking broadminded males within a 20 mile radius. 01902 489 181.

GENTLEMAN, 60 Slightly disabled, house and car owner, also a singer, seeks a lady, 40-70 years of age, for friendship. Photo appreciated and returned.

Please write to: Box Number P20749, Express and Star, Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

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Easy going, WLTm nice lady, slim build with GSOH aged 50-65 years to enjoy meals/days out, holidays, countryside etc.

Box Number P20750, Express and Star, Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

## MEET SEXY local women, genuine

Meet local women, genuine, all contacts, face to face, all 0330 022 6244/07008 026348.

## sports clubs

DUDLEY SPORTS 6-A-SIDE SUMMER TOURNAMENT

Saturday May 20, Sunday, May 21, 2017.

Afternoon session U'6s, U'8s, U'13s.

Afternoon session U'10s, U'12s, U'16s.

Sunday, morning session U'7s, U'9s and U'11s.

Afternoon session, U'14's, U'15's boys, Girls, U'10's to U'16's

Download application form www.dudleysportsfc.co.uk

or ring Fred 07788 684258.

## Classified Ads

01902 317878

or book online at bookanad.expressandstar.co.uk

\* 135 customers surveyed July 2016)

\*\* Private advertisers only

## Classified Ads

Call us on 01902 317878

or book online at bookanad.expressandstar.co.uk

Classified Ads





Mascots turned out for the annual Mascot Assault Course



Stourbridge and West Bromwich Albion Legends teams line-up for kick off on Sunday, alongside the matchday mascots



Albion's Darren "Big Dave" Moore chatting with fans at half-time



The Mayor of Dudley, Mohammed Hanif, showed his support

# Victory in bag for Albion but hospice the winner

## SPORTING FEATURE

By Dan Malin

*A lot of the lads have already signed up to be there next year, so we're confident of retaining our title and can't wait to do it all again!*

A CHARITY football match between Stourbridge Old Boys & West Bromwich Albion Legends has raised more than £20,000 for the Mary Stevens Hospice, which provides 24-hour care for families battling the impact of life-limiting illnesses.

The game was played at Stourbridge FC's War Memorial Athletic Ground, at Amblecote, in front of a capacity crowd as the teams competed for the Jane Webb Memorial Trophy, named in remembrance of the local woman who provides the motivation for the game each year.

The day also included a huge family fun day, a sporting auction, and the opportunity for local children to have an once-in-a-lifetime matchday experience, as mascots, ball-children or flag-bearers.

Crowds were also treated to a mascot assault course sponsored by Midcalf Nicholls, with characters from the likes of West Bromwich Albion's Baggie Bird and Wolverhampton Wanderers' Wolfie joining those from Toys 'R' Us, The Tenth Lock and Mommy's Mascots in a chaotic obstacle course, which saw Baggie Bird steal an unlikely, late victory.

### Amazed

After raising £15,000 in its debut year in 2016, event co-founders Matt Webb and Mark Naylor had hoped they would beat last year's sum but confessed that they found themselves "absolutely amazed" by the support the day received this year from supporters, players and volunteers.

In total, more than 40 players took part in the day, including 15 former-pros such as former Baggies skipper Darren "Big Dave" Moore, Richard Sneekes, Bob Taylor, Nigel Quashie, Geoff Horsfield and Des Lyttle.

Moore has now captained the Albion side for two years in a row, and delighted fans by playing in goal for 15 minutes at the end of the second half, before running the length of the pitch to take and score a penalty.

Fans witnessed 10 goals on the day with Albion

running out 6-4 winners in a hotly-contested match under the sweltering April sun, with fans taking to Facebook and Twitter afterwards to comment how much they'd enjoyed the day.

Charity, of course, was the big winner.

The Mayor of Dudley, Mohammed Hanif, was also on hand to meet the children involved in the day and to chat to players before kick-off, alongside the Hospice CEO, captain Stevan Jackson.

Matt Webb, Stourbridge Legends captain and event co-founder said: "It really is just sinking in."

"When you look around, and all you can see is just thousands of families enjoying the day it brings it all home. Honestly, there's no feeling like it."

He added: "I can't tell everyone involved how grateful I am for making the day possible, and thank you so much to the thousands of people who came along and supported the match, I hope they all enjoyed it and we can't wait to go again. We've got a trophy to win back!"

Mark Naylor, West Bromwich Albion Legends manager and event co-founder said: "I don't think I've ever experienced anything like that."

"To have such overwhelming support from the local community, the clubs, the charities and everyone else involved was absolutely incredible and the end result of all of that hard work was a day that we'll never forget."

"A lot of the lads have already signed up to be there next year, so we're confident of retaining our title and

can't wait to do it all again!" Amanda Bowen, deputy fundraising and lottery manager said: "Matt and Mark simply can't be praised highly enough for what they've done."

"It's not just the fact that they've paid for so many families to receive our care when they need it most, it's the day they create for the community."

"They bring people together to simply enjoy being together as a family and watch absolute superstars roll back the years."

"The work that has gone into this event has been absolutely huge, and to see it all come together in the way it did was just so special."

She added: "So we'd like to say thank you to the supporters who turned up in their thousands, the volunteers who make days like this possible, the staff who have worked so hard, West Bromwich Albion and Stourbridge for being so, so supportive of the event and, maybe most importantly, Jane Webb for raising such an incredibly kind-hearted man. She also took care of the weather, which was more than we could ever have asked."

### Memorabilia

After the game, a sporting auction and post-match party took place in the Stourbridge FC club house, with signed and match-worn memorabilia donated by a plethora of first-team West Bromwich Albion stars including Ben Foster, Gareth McAuley, James Morrison, Chris Brunt and the recently-departed Jonas Olsson.

In the midst of everything going on, on the day, the thousands in attendance also perfectly observed a minute's silence before kick-off, to pay their respects to the Wilkinson family whose devastating loss has shocked the town this week.

All involved in the organisation of this event would like those affected to know that their hearts and thoughts are with them at "this impossibly difficult time".

To find out more about the work of the Mary Stevens Hospice, visit [www.marystevenshospice.co.uk](http://www.marystevenshospice.co.uk)

● Images and videos from the day are available to view on the hospice Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/marystevenshospice](http://www.facebook.com/marystevenshospice)

## Testing time for Josh as new season starts

TEENAGE race ace Josh Hiatt enjoyed his first proper run out on his new KTM bike during an official test day at Mallory Park.

The Cannock starlet, just 14, has made the step up from the Mextrakit series to compete in this year's KTM Cup, which supports the British Superbike series.

Hiatt will be one of the youngest riders on the grid this season, which began last weekend. He was working hard on his fitness behind the scenes ahead of the campaign getting under way.

Father Nigel said: "Josh met all the riders from the championship and he also got in lots of track time too, which was good. I think Josh will be one of the youngest riders on the grid because with the changes some of them will be 22-years-old this year."

Nigel said testing went well at Mallory Park, with the bike working and his son getting quicker every time he went out.

"It was encouraging because it's a much bigger bike than the one he's used to riding," he said. "But he's still enjoying it every time he goes out. He seems to find riding a two-stroke rather than a four-stroke."

"He's getting more and more confident on it."

## Erin runs and swims to top five position

A DUDLEY schoolgirl has become one of the top five biathletes in the country. Erin Maher was one of three pupils from Maidensbridge Primary in Wall Heath who travelled to London's Crystal Palace National Sports Centre for the British Schools Modern Biathlon Championships.

And after shattering a number of personal bests on the track and in the pool, the Year 6 pupil secured an impressive fifth place overall in the under-11s girls' category.

Erin, Amie Parker and Jamie Hiscox, who all attend the Beachcroft Road school, qualified for the championships through their performances in two qualifying events in October and November last year.

Modern Biathlon involves an 800m run followed by a 50m swim. Each performance is awarded points and then combined to produce final standings.

Amie's hopes of similar success were dashed by an ankle injury in the 800m, while Jamie finished 78th out of 165 in the under-11 boys' category. Dean Nolan, deputy headteacher at Maidensbridge Primary, said: "We are very proud of what these children have achieved."

Erin is also the current Dudley Schools' cross-country champion.

## Quiet Men Gethin has big shout at title

IT'S been a whirlwind three months for Walsall boxer Martin Gethin – from the clutches of retirement to competing for the WBO Inter-Continental title and winning an IBF International belt in-between.

'The Quiet Man' defeated Liam Richards in front of a few hundred fans at Walsall Town Hall back in November in what was supposed to be his farewell fight in his hometown.

Just days later he got the call to travel to London for the IBF International super lightweight title at Wembley Arena and overcame John Wayne Hibbert with fourth round knockout.

That victory has now landed Gethin a shot at the WBO Inter-Continental Super Lightweight title against the highly-rated 23-year-old Jack Catterall at the Manchester Arena on Saturday, a bout broadcast live on Boxnation and BT Sport.

Also on the card, Terry Flanagan defends his WBO lightweight title while super welterweight rivals, Liam Smith and Liam Williams, go toe-to-toe.

Double Olympic gold medallist Nicola Adams will make her pro bow, alongside fellow debutant and amateur stand-out Daniel Dubois.



# Sport

## Moore the merrier in legends' charity clash

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## Heathens to face tougher tests – boss

CRADLEY boss Will Pottinger admits tougher tests are just around the corner after their massive opening night win over King's Lynn.

The Heathens return to Wolverhampton's Monmore Green for their next home match on Easter Monday, April 17, when they face Mildenhall. But they started the season by tearing apart King's Lynn 61-29 at Birmingham last week with every rider in the points.

Said Pottinger: "It was a very pleasing, confidence boosting result for the lads. But we know there will be tougher tests ahead."

"King's Lynn weren't the strongest but you can only do the job on the night and it was nice to see all the lads in the points."

He added: "I was particularly pleased to see riders like Luke Harris and Joe Lawlor scoring well. I think we have potential to have a good season."

Tom Perry opened his campaign with a maximum on his return to the Heathens side after two seasons with Birmingham.

Said Perry: "It's great to be back with Cradley and I obviously couldn't have asked for a better start."

"To get my own season up and running like that is ideal and hopefully I can put in performances similar to that all season."

"It wasn't just about me though, everyone rode well and everyone did their job and more."

"We know we'll have tougher meetings this year but there were definitely plenty of encouraging signs from all of the team."

"We wanted to send a message out to the rest of the league and I think we definitely did that!"

"Now we're really looking forward to the next meeting on Easter Monday."

## Hagley secure a tight win on the last ball of innings

**Pedmore (115-5) beat Enville (110) by five runs**

CAPTAIN Matt Porter opened for Pedmore with Dave Skelding, who was run out for 14. John Herdman and Porter moved the score along. The captain reached 25 in to time but the run rate slowed until his return to the crease.

Enville captain Jono Howells led the reply. Greg Tomkins, with Tom Bingham, also set about the bowling, smashing John Wenham for 39 off two overs.

At halfway Enville were well placed at 63 without loss. With the retirement of the main batsman the scoring slowed. They were in sight of the target with 12 required off the last over, but fell short. **Hagley 'B' (92-3) beat Oldswinford (90-5) by three wickets**

OLDSWINFORD got off to a cautious start. Captain Harry Stanier tried to get momentum going, while opener Dave Friel reached 25 off the last ball. They were helped by quite a few wides.

With Hagley needing four off the last over, Pat Addis bowled three dot balls, then a single and a wicket, leaving three off the last ball, which Hagley achieved.

## Mums on the Run in marathon task



The Stourbridge Mums on the Run team

A GROUP of Stourbridge mothers head to Brighton for a marathon challenge in aid of Mary Stevens Hospice this weekend.

Five members Stourbridge Mums On The Run (SMOR), namely Emma Barnes, Rebecca Powers, Lucy Stevens, Rachel Hunt and Sally Baker, head for the south coast race on Sunday, having already nearly doubled their fundraising target of £500.

SMOR is a running group set up by Emma in 2011. She decided that after some time solo running, she would much rather run with a buddy and some like-minded friends, prompting the group's creation. The group has expanded rap-

idly since then, now even including one honorary male member, and won "Community Sports Club of the Year 2016" at a local awards ceremony. Co-ordinated on Facebook, members simply post where and when they would like to run, and local members have the opportunity to join them on runs ranging from short jogs all the way up to full marathons.

Emma said: "The training has been mentally and physically challenging, but as a team we have been so supported by each other's strength, motivation and friendship. It truly is a team effort."

To sponsor the ladies, visit [www.justgiving.com/fundraising/stourbridge-mums-on-the-run](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/stourbridge-mums-on-the-run)

# STOUR MATCH IS OTLEY CONTESTED

Stourbridge 36 Otley 26

**WITH the second half barely started Stour had cruised to a 31-0 lead and secured a bonus point, but the visitors' late rally, while never threatening the lead, did enough to take the gloss off the performance.**

Ten tries were scored in all, with flanker Nigel Mukarati the first to touch down.

Captain Ciaran Moore was next to go over and Nathan Tilsley completed the first-half scoring at 19-0.

Lock Chris Depper was worked over the line in the corner with less than a minute of the second half on the clock and Adam Rundle increased the advantage.

Otley started to introduce their replacements and managed to set up camp in the Stour 22 where centre James White was worked over after a catch and drive. Stour pressed again from a penalty award and replacement prop Mark George was the man in possession when a maul was rumbled over the tryline.

Otley weren't done though, and a late rally produced tries for flanker James Wood, fullback Tom Hodson and at the death for hooker Ben Steele while Moore was cooling his heels in the sinbin for a late tackle.

On Saturday, Stour are away at Leicestershire outfit Hinckley. After the Easter break their final home league game of 2016/17 will be on April 22 against Tynedale. At Stourton Park on Saturday Stourbridge Lions face a promotion shootout with Midlands 2 West (N) leaders Leek who are two points ahead of them with two games to play.

Meanwhile, a planning application has been submitted to build a new artificial grass pitch at Stourton Park.

Plans for a full-sized playing enclosure have been lodged with South Staffs District Council. They also feature a new floodlighting system, gated entrances and hard standing areas and a container to be used for maintenance and storing equipment.

● A North Midlands under-20s side, featuring Stour's Ben Tibbets, slipped to a 31-25 defeat against Durham in the quarter-final of the national championship at Luctonians' on Saturday.



Stourbridge centre Joe Heatley breaks through the Otley defences

## Decisive match sees team relegated

STOURBRIDGE Chess Club began the week with a Worcester District division 2 trip to Droitwich and got off to a good start with a win for Chris Cox on board 4.

This was followed by a win for Paul Sharratt who won with an awesome final combination. Dave Scriven was a pawn down but played well to secure a draw

and give Stourbridge the four board match – 1½-2½. Stourbridge have an excellent chance of winning the division.

On Tuesday night there was a decisive match in Birmingham division 3 when Olton hosted Sutton Coldfield 'B'. Stourbridge were level on points with SC 'B' at the bottom of the division and needed Olton to win

to force a relegation play-off. It wasn't to be. SC 'B' drew the match to earn the point they needed for safety and Stourbridge were relegated.

On Wednesday the Wolverhampton division 2 team played their last match of the season at home versus Rushall with nothing at stake for either team. Stourbridge won.

## Benbow on mark again to earn point

**Hednesford Town 1 Stourbridge 1**

A STUNNING Luke Benbow free-kick grabbed a late share of the spoils for Stourbridge at Hednesford Town on Monday night.

The visitors began the game on the front foot and almost took the lead in the fourth minute when Leon Broadhurst saw an effort from 25 yards deflected just past the post.

Kayleden Brown failed to beat Dan Crane in the Hednesford goal with two efforts, before Jordan Nadat had the Pitmen's first opportunity.

Glassboys threatened in the second half as Benbow hit the bar then Dan Preston hit the post, but the hosts went in front on 69 minutes as Nadat flicked on a cross and Danny Glover turned home.

Hednesford almost added a second in the 82nd minute as Nadat saw a shot well saved, but just two minutes later Benbow's wonderful free-kick earned a share of the spoils.

It was Glassboys second successive 1-1 draw following a stalemate at play-off rivals Buxton on Saturday.

Boss Gary Hackett praised felt slightly disappointed to not get all three points after Luke Benbow's 28th goal of the season had pulled his side level from an early deficit.

Hackett said: "This is a tough place to come, Buxton don't concede many goals and I felt after the first 15 or 20 minutes we were the better side and whilst I'm pleased with a point I thought if anyone was going to get all three it was us."

The Glassboys were badly depleted by injury and conceded through Nial Doran after just four minutes.

A minute before half-time Benbow turned and bent the ball in from 20 yards out. It hit the underneath the crossbar before going in.

## Platt's the way to give Veltz lifeline

**Halesowen Town 1 Skelmersdale 0**

HALESOWEN took a huge step towards safety with victory over relegated Skelmersdale in a must-win contest ahead of five consecutive away games.

Veltz had goalkeeper Dan Platt to thank for securing all three points after making a fine 58th minute penalty save.

The first half was interrupted when Veltz defender Jonathon Moran was stretched off with a knee injury and there was a further delay caused by a loose dog.

Bradley Lewis headed home a 55th minute winner. Three minutes later Platt saved Steven Gillespie's spot-kick.

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